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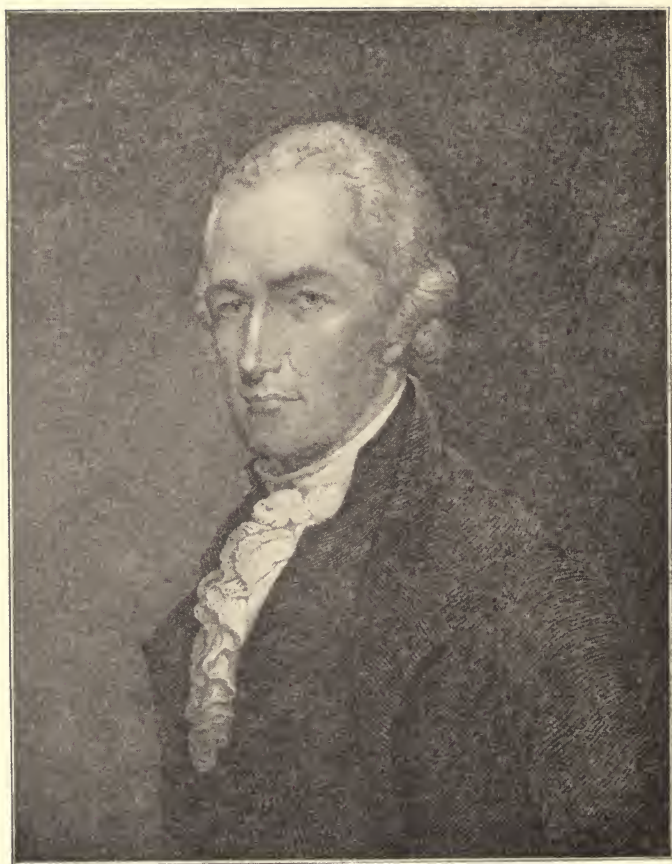
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A. Hamilton

# Great Americans of History

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## ALEXANDER HAMILTON

### A CHARACTER SKETCH

BY

EDWARD S. ELLIS, A. M.

AUTHOR OF

"The People's Standard History of the United States," "The Eclectic Primary History of the United States," etc.

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WITH AN ESSAY ON THE PATRIOT BY

G. MERCER ADAM

Late Editor of "Self Culture" Magazine, Etc., Etc.

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BY

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TOGETHER WITH

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THE precocity of Alexander Hamilton approached the marvelous. Henry Cabot Lodge and others give the date of his birth as January 11, 1757, but Bancroft makes it earlier. The distinguished historian thought it incredible that the brilliant mind of Hamilton should have matured so early. His name appears as a witness on a deed written in 1766, when, if the date named for his birth be accepted, he was only nine years old, and yet, as Mr. Lodge demonstrates, the evidence is convincing that such was the fact.

His birthplace was the island Nevis, one of the British West Indies. His father is said to have been a Scotch merchant. A good deal of mystery surrounds his family and early youth.

Born in that tropical region, the brain of this wonderful youth flowered with the amazing swiftness of the vegetation around him. At the age of twelve, when a clerk in a store, his letters to his friend, Dr. Edward Stevens, were those of a philosophical instructor. Shortly after he was given charge of his employer's affairs and managed them well, studying and writing as opportunity presented. Soon his astonishing talents led his relatives to send him to the American colonies to be educated.

He arrived in Boston, in the autumn of 1772, and went to New York, where the letters he bore from Dr. Knox, a clergyman of Nevis, procured good and wise friends. Entering a well known grammar school at Elizabethtown, New Jersey, he studied with the intense energy that characterized everything he did. His fiery brain led him to write a great deal, both of prose and verse, and much of it betrayed marked talent. It took but a short time for him to prepare for college. He would have gone to Princeton, had he been permitted to advance as fast as his inclination prompted. Following his impatient bend, he entered King's (now Columbia) College in New York, and, aided by a private tutor, he progressed with astonishing rapidity in his studies.

The American colonies were then on the verge of revolt against England. The greatest minds in the country were grappling with the momentous question, and it took Hamilton but a brief while to range himself with his impetuous energy on the side of his adopted country. New York was under the domination of the Tories, her Assembly being pronounced supporters of the home government. With a view of bringing her into the right column, a mass meeting was held in the fields July 6, 1774, by the patriot leaders. Among those present was the boy Hamilton. He listened with rapt interest to the addresses, and burned with impatience at their lukewarmness. Unable to repress his feelings, he threaded his way to the platform, and launched out in a patriotic address that held his hearers spell-bound. His masterful oration drew attention to him, and some time after-



ward he was approached with offers from the Tory side, but all were spurned. It may be said that he began his public life at that time. In the following December, he put forth his first political writing, "A Full Vindication," in the form of a pamphlet which was a reply to Tory criticism on the Continental Congress.

This pamphlet was soon followed by another "The Farmer Refuted," both of which attracted wide attention and exerted marked influence. As an evidence of the author's statesmanlike grasp, these sentences may be quoted in the argument against the insistence that Parliament had the unlimited right to legislate for the colonies:

"All men have one common origin: they participate in one common nature, and consequently have one common right. No reason can be advanced why one man should exercise any power or pre-eminence over his fellow-creatures, unless they have voluntarily vested him with it. Since then, Americans have not, by any act of theirs, empowered the British Parliament to make laws for them, it follows they can have no just authority to do it.

"The Parliament claims a right to tax us in all cases whatsoever; its late acts are in virtue of that claim. How ridiculous, then, it is to affirm that we are quarreling for the trifling sum of three pence a pound on tea, when it is evidently the principle against which we contend."

In appealing to the natural rights of man, he used these impressive words:

"The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rumaged

for, among old parchments or musty records. They are written, as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature by the hand of Divinity itself."

These pamphlets were variously attributed to prominent patriot leaders, and, when it became known that the boyish Hamilton was the author, the admiration was unbounded. He was already a leader in the cause of American independence. But Professor Anson D. Morse shows that while the latter words have a democratic ring, they are not peculiarly American, but express universal, rather than American democratic principles and might have been uttered by a Frenchman. Hamilton was not in reality quarreling with the aristocratic institutions of Great Britain, but with her policy.

The pressure forced New York into the Congress; the Revolution opened and Hamilton for a time continued his battles for his country through the newspapers. The sentiment for independence rapidly crystallized, and when the New York convention ordered the raising of a company of artillery, Hamilton applied for the command. To some it looked like presumption on the part of the youth, but his examination was so brilliant that the command was promptly given to him. He rapidly gained recruits and spent the last dollar he received from home on the equipment of his company. He was alert, active, patriotic, ambitious, aglow with enthusiasm, and his magnetic personality seemed to carry everything before it. He was too serious, too intensely in earnest to slight any detail.

He drilled his company unceasingly until its skill

and discipline attracted the notice of his superiors. General Nathaniel Greene, the officer second in ability to Washington, was so much pleased with the splendid troop that he sought out the young captain.

Greatly impressed by his ability, he introduced him to Washington. Hamilton never forgot the kindness of the Quaker general, whom he rated as the



Major-General Nathaniel Greene.  
Born 1742. Died 1786.

first soldier of the Revolution. The artillery company and its commander soon proved their worth. The mistake of General Putnam precipitated the disaster on Long Island, in the latter part of August, 1776, but during the retreat of the American forces, Hamilton covered the rear with a courage and sagacity that received the praise of Washington. The smoke of battle roused the



The First Meeting of Washington and Hamilton.

fiery patriotism of the young West Indian. None fought more bravely than he on the retreat up the Hudson, and, when Fort Washington fell, he volunteered to recapture it by storm, but the Commander-in-chief would not permit him to undertake the hopeless task. Then, as all know, followed the frightful retreat through New Jersey, where the grim Continentals crimsoned the snow with the blood from their naked feet. Hamilton was foremost among the heroes at Trenton and Princeton, by which time only twenty-five men were left of his artillery men. His courage, skill and reputation as a brilliant writer caused Washington to appoint him as one of his aides with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. This appointment was made March 1, 1777, before Hamilton was twenty-one years old.

While the change of station was the best thing for him, he was not satisfied with it. That he possessed military abilities of a high order had been proven. None felt this more than Hamilton himself. He believed that a brilliant career was before him. He always had enormous self-confidence, and was certain that if he remained in line, there was scarcely a rank beyond his reach.

Whether or not Hamilton possessed the genius of a great general, must always remain conjecture, for he was never put to the supreme test, but assuredly he would have attained high station, though his youth must have stopped him at a point which he might have passed, had he been a score of years older.

He proved an invaluable aid to Washington, whose correspondence was enormous, beside which, he acquitted



himself well in the subsequent battles at all of which he was present. Some of the admirers of Hamilton would give him the whole credit for the various important papers which issued from headquarters, while he was acting as secretary. That he was vigorous, brilliant and gifted cannot be questioned, and he was vastly helpful to the Commander-in-chief; but, as Lodge points out, the central ideas, and guiding principles of the documents were always Washington's while Hamilton merely polished and adorned. The momentous "Yes" or "No" was uttered by the commander, and the secretary clothed the word in fitting sentences. Washington gave full credit to his aide, whom he appreciated, but nothing can detract from the grandeur of that peerless Patriot, without whom, the struggle for independence would have ended ere it had hardly begun.

Despite the impatient temper of Hamilton, he displayed exquisite tact and discretion while in the service of his chief. He secured the needed reinforcements from Gates, when that officer was puffed with conceit over the brilliant victory won for him, by his generals and soldiers at Saratoga. He required the most delicate handling, and the skill of Hamilton could not have been surpassed. He could be curt and imperious with Putnam, who needed such treatment, and sympathetic as a woman with the stricken wife of Benedict Arnold.

One day in February, 1781, Hamilton was tardy in responding to a call from Washington. The great man gently chided and reminded him that to keep him waiting was a mark of disrespect. The secretary bridled up:





General Israel Putnam.  
Born 1718.      Died 1790.

"I am not conscious of it, sir; but since you have thought it, we part."

Nothing is more absurd than to dignify this little affair with the name of a quarrel. It took a great deal to rouse the tempestuous wrath of Washington, but when it once flamed into life, it swept everything before it. The wretched being who was its victim was crushed, silent and helpless. Those who saw Washington when he confronted the retreating Lee at Monmouth, remembered the terrific scene to the end of their lives. When St. Clair, who had disregarded the solemn warnings of President Washington, and was overwhelmed as a consequence by the western Indians, came into the presence of the great man months afterward, it was with fear and trembling, for he dreaded the lightning outburst. But there was no anger shown by Washington toward his secretary. On the one hand was the commander, tall, massive, grand, calm, unruffled, in the pride of his mental and physical perfection; on the other, the swarthy, brilliant and peppery youth, with a mighty good opinion of himself, as was warranted.

No more unerring judge of men than Washington ever lived. He must have smiled at the conduct of the young man, but, at the same time, he did not forget his value. Magnanimous at all times, he made advances to Hamilton, who repelled them. None the less, the Commander, foreseeing the inestimable services he was likely to render his country, retained his deep interest in him to the end. At Yorktown, he gave Hamilton the coveted privilege of leading an assault upon one of the outworks of

of the enemy. Such was his dash that he completed his work much more quickly than the French force which undertook and accomplished a similar task.

With this brilliant exploit, Hamilton terminated his military career. The independence of his country hav-

ing been attained, he gave his energies to the pursuits of peace. Despite the great military ability he had shown, he was a born statesman. He proved that, when a boy at King's College, and in the swirl and rush of battle, his thoughts turned to questions of government. He foresaw that the real peril of the



Hamilton leading the Assault at Yorktown.  
Relief on one of the Bronze Doors of the Capitol,  
Washington, D. C.

country would come after the treaty of peace was signed. A common danger held the thirteen colonies together and when that was removed, they would fall apart and crumble to fragments. In September, 1780, he

wrote a letter to James Duane, a member of the Continental Congress, in which he gave his views "of the defects of our present system, and the changes necessary to save us from ruin." The fundamental defect he declared, lay in the want of power in Congress, and this was due to three causes:

"An excess of the spirit of liberty, which has made the particular states, show a jealousy of all power not in their own hands,—and this jealousy had led them to exercise a right of judging in the last resort, of the measures recommended by Congress, and of acting according to their own opinions of their propriety or necessity; a diffidence, in Congress, of their own powers, by which they have been timid and indecisive in their resolutions, constantly making concessions to the states, till they have scarcely left themselves the shadow of power; a want of sufficient means at their disposal to answer the public exigencies."

Previous to this he wrote an anonymous letter to Robert Morris, treating of the financial affairs of the country, in which he gave proofs of his wonderful genius, which has never been surpassed anywhere. The worthless currency was a greater peril to the cause of independence than the arms of the British. Hamilton proposed to provide for a gradual contraction, by a tax in kind, and a foreign loan, which was to form the basis of a national bank. The last was meant to bring together the interests of the moneyed classes in the support of the government credit. Hamilton wrought out all the details, and his future policy crystallized in his brain.

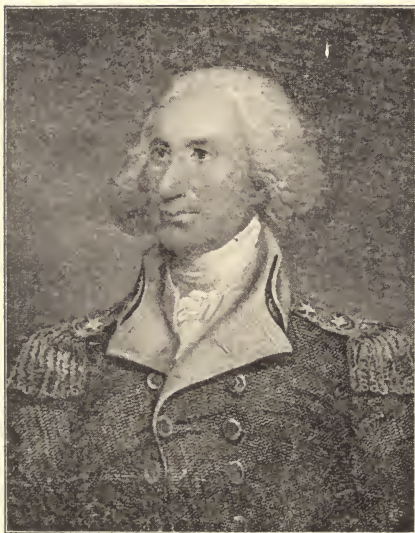
On December 14th, 1780, he was married to Miss





Mrs. Alexander Hamilton.  
(From an original picture painted in 1781, by R. Earl. Courtesy  
D. Appleton & Co.)

Elizabeth Schuyler, daughter of General Philip Schuyler. She was a woman of rare intelligence and worth, and her father was wealthy and widely respected. He repeatedly offered to help Hamilton pecuniarily, for he



Major-General Philip Schuyler.  
Born 1733. Died 1804.

was without means, but the young man refused, sublimely confident of his ability to earn whatever he needed, whenever it was needed.

As soon as the war was over, he took up the study of law, pursuing it with such vehement energy that he was admitted to the bar in the early summer of 1782. About the same time Robert Morris appointed him Continental Receiver of

Taxes for New York. His ability soon attracted such favorable attention that the legislature elected him to Congress, where he took his seat in November, 1782.

That body had fallen into weakness, and the majority failed to comprehend the woeful disasters that threatened the country. Hamilton labored with might and main to arouse his associates to the truth, but when his term



ended, he had the mortification of feeling that he had failed utterly in his mission. Bad as was the condition of his country it must become worse before the drowsy sentinels would awake.

While practicing law in New York, Hamilton showed his high-mindedness by his defense of the Tories. Naturally the resentment against them was great. The community clamored for vengeance upon those who were now helpless, and they were made to suffer in many instances, cruel persecution. Hamilton's eloquent plea for justice was successful, but it made him intensely unpopular for the time in the community, which was a matter of indifference to him. His makeup rendered it impossible for him to be a demagogue.

Meanwhile, the country was going to the dogs, and only a few people such as Washington, Hamilton and others, saw it. It is hard at this day, when our resources are limitless and the unity of the states perfect, to comprehend the apparently utterly hopeless condition of the country, throughout the period between the close of the Revolution and the adoption of the Constitution. There was no army or navy, no cohesion, everybody seemed to be in debt and without the means of paying their obligations. The currency was worthless; broken promises and bankruptcy were on every hand, and worst of all, scarcely anybody cared.

The one effectual remedy for all this was as plain as the sun in the heavens: there must be a strong central government. Congress had degenerated into a scene of entertainment for the states, for the utmost it could do

was to make suggestions to them, and they paid as much heed as if the advice had been chattered by a group of Hottentots in South Africa. A warning rumble of thunder came from Massachusetts, when in the winter of 1786-87, Captain Shays, at the head of an armed mob, threatened the existence of the courts and law. This defiant act set people to thinking.

Massachusetts instructed her representatives to urge upon Congress the necessity of a new convention, but the representatives gave no heed to the instructions. Virginia, also, tried her hand. In January, 1786, having made a commercial convention with Maryland, she passed resolutions, calling for a meeting at Annapolis to consider the question of establishing a uniform commercial system.

New York appointed five commissioners, of which Hamilton was one. Full of hope, he went with his colleagues to Annapolis, where he found that only four other states had sent representatives. Nevertheless, he drew up an address which was sent out to the people, setting forth the imminent need of a complete reorganization of the government, and urging a convention of the states for that purpose.

An opening had been made, and the wedge was driven home. The states were morbidly jealous of one another, and Governor Clinton of New York was bitterly opposed to the formation of a powerful national government, as was foreshadowed by the action of Hamilton and his associates. The fight was seemingly hopeless for Hamilton, but he loved a battle of that nature. He secured

an election to the legislature, and became the leader of the forces opposed to the governor. The first struggle was over the proposal to provide a permanent revenue for Congress. Clinton defeated the measure, because he had the votes, but the wreck and ruin which was thus brought face to face with the country, caused a reaction and was therefore beneficial. It set the people to thinking harder than before.

Hamilton, however, against a hostile majority, obtained the appointment of three delegates to the approaching convention. They were Chief Justice Yates, John Lansing, Jr., and Hamilton himself. The first two were unshakable adherents of Clinton, and opponents of an improved federal government.

The representatives of nine states came together in Philadelphia, May 25, 1787, and the moulding of a Constitution began. Hamilton's towering ability never shone more impressively. His colleagues were his uncompromising enemies. He was too wise to weaken his power by projecting his isolation upon the convention, and thereby weakening the cause so dear to him. Instead of taking part in the debates and regular business of the convention, he worked privately at counselling and arguing with the various members, and thereby accomplished great results. He concentrated his efforts in a single speech at the opening of the convention, after the various plans had been submitted. Absolutely master of his subject, feeling the truth of what he said in every nerve and fibre of his being, his address, more than five hours in length, was one of the most masterful of its na-

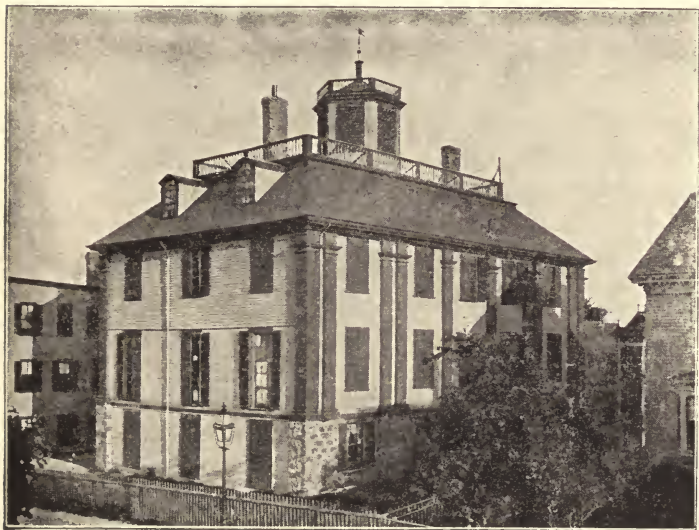
ture ever delivered. Its effect was profound. He had wrought out his own scheme and explained it fully. Like all presented, it followed in a general way the English system, agreeing substantially with the plan finally adopted. His republic, however, was to be aristocratic, rather than democratic, and the states were to be shorn of most of their powers. He favored electing the President and Senators for life by the vote of those who possessed a certain property qualification, and gave to the President the appointment of the various state governors, who were to have a vote on all state legislation.

Doubtless, Hamilton perceived that these features could never be adopted, but his aim was to tone up the members, and lead them to higher ground, than they were disposed to take. He believed that by aiming at the sun, he would strike a more elevated mark, than by launching his arrow at a target on the earth.

His colleagues in disgust abandoned the convention, whereupon Hamilton unhesitatingly affixed his signature and that of New York to the Constitution.

But his greatest work still lay before him: that was to obtain the assent of New York to the Constitution, which could not become operative, until ratified by nine of the thirteen states. The political revolution was opened and no single American rendered such inestimable service as Hamilton in bringing it to a triumphant conclusion. It should be remembered that a decisive majority throughout all the states were opposed to the Constitution, but they were now face to face with it, and had to decide whether to accept it, or anarchy and ruin.

When one reflects upon the vast blessings that have flowed from the adoption of that wonderful instrument, it seems incredible that the press teemed with passionate articles against, as well as in favor of it; that its friends



Shirley Mansion, Roxbury, Mass.  
Residence of Governors Shirley and Eustis. Hamilton, Washington,  
Burr, Franklin and other notable men were entertained here.

were burned in effigy, and that rioting and bloodshed followed in many places; but such was the fact.

The fiercest fight was in New York, and it is hardly short of the truth to say that the battle for the Constitution was fought out by Hamilton alone. True, he had gained supporters, but he was the David, who hurled the pebble that sank into the brain of Goliath.



The Clintonians enlisted their ablest writers to combat the scheme; Hamilton replied in a series of letters signed "Publius." Madison gave him much help, and Jay lent an occasional hand, but the credit of the work belongs to Hamilton. Of this remarkable collection of essays, known as "The Federalist," it has been truly said that it is still the best exposition of the Constitution aside from judicial interpretation. It was Hamilton's first Titan blow in its favor, and with the same vigor and ability he set to work to secure the adoption of the instrument by the State of New York.

When he entered the convention to quote his declaration, two-thirds of the members and four-sevenths of the people were against him. The majority were led by Melancthon Smith, able, alert and brilliant, and by Hamilton's two colleagues at Philadelphia. Every detail of the work of the Philadelphia convention was scrutinized and discussed; Hamilton, who was continually on his feet was attacked, misrepresented and maligned; seemingly, each utterance of his was distorted, and no advantage that could be seized was overlooked. Undaunted, the champion parried every thrust or blow, and in turn smote with a power that was irresistible. He defeated all attempts at adjournment, the innumerable amendments, and the absurdity of a "conditional ratification."

Finally, Melancthon Smith exploded his bomb-shell by rising to his feet, and announcing that Hamilton's arguments had convinced him, and he should vote for the Constitution. With him went others, and on the vote



the instrument was adopted by a majority of three. The history of politics, legislation and public debate contains the record of no victory more complete or remarkable than this.

But the great work was not yet finished. New York and Virginia had demanded a new convention to amend the Constitution. This had to be defeated, for otherwise the consequences would be disastrous.

Hamilton, now a member of Congress, carried through an ordinance fixing the places and dates, for setting the new government in motion. Clinton brought about the defeat of Hamilton for réélection, and secured the control of the lower branch of the legislature, though the Senate was Federal. A dead-lock followed with the result that New York was unrepresented in the first electoral college, and had no Senator when the first Congress assembled.

In the next election, the legislature favored the Constitution. Thus the U. S. Senators were Federalists, as were four of the six representatives. The day selected for the assembling of the new Congress was March 4th, but no quorum appeared until April 6th. Then when the electoral votes were counted, it was found that George Washington was the unanimous choice for the Presidency, while John Adams of Massachusetts, having received the next highest number, was elected Vice President.

Hamilton now entered upon the grand work of his life. Appointed Secretary of the Treasury by President Washington, who now as always appreciated his extraordinary ability, he found himself free to carry out his

ideas. It was a herculean task, that of ministering his functions in the new government in such a way as to cement the nation more closely, to make it stronger, to secure the respect of other nations, to bring prosperity, and *to be right*. Who would not have shrunk from the task? But Hamilton welcomed it, for it promised full play to his peerless genius.

He was thirty-two years old when he became the first Secretary of the Treasury. Recognizing his matchless skill, Congress and the Cabinet leaned on him from the beginning. He had hardly taken the oath of office, when Congress requested him to prepare a report on the public credit. This was followed by other demands until to quote Lodge:

"In the course of a year he was asked to report, and did report, with full details upon the raising, management and collection of the revenue, including a scheme for revenue cutters; as to estimate of income and expenditure, as to the temporary regulation of the chaotic currency; as to navigation laws, and the regulation of the coasting trade, after thorough consideration of the heap of undigested statistics; as to the post-office, for which he drafted a bill; as to the purchase of West Point; on the great question of public lands, and a uniform system of dealing with them, and upon all claims against the government."

He dealt promptly and effectively with all these and other matters, besides drawing up a scheme for a judicial system. Money had to be provided at once, and there was not a dollar in the treasury, nor any credit, but

with admirable ingenuity, Hamilton met every exigency.

He set the whole financial machinery, complicated and intricate, moving like a well-oiled engine, complied with every demand upon him, and when, after the January recess, he laid his financial scheme before Congress, it was so masterly, so complete, so perfect in detail, so far-reaching and comprehensive, that it marked an epoch in the history of our country.

Jefferson, Adams and others left their imprint upon the Constitution, as it was gradually moulded into form, but it reveals slight impress of Hamilton: it was his to stamp his personality deeper than any other man, upon the governmental policy, and the political system, which grew up during those impressionable years of the republic.



First Paper Money Issued by the Colonies. Printed by Paul Revere in Boston, Aug. 18. 1775.

Nothing is more admirable than Hamilton's statement of the objects to be attained by his wise policy:

"To justify and preserve the confidence of the most enlightened friends of good government; to promote the increasing respectability of the American name; to answer the calls of justice; to furnish new resources both

to agriculture and commerce; to cement more closely the union of the States; to add to their security against foreign attack; to establish public order on the basis of an upright and liberal policy: these are the great and invaluable ends to be secured by a proper and adequate provision at the present period for the support of the public credit."

Hamilton's comprehensive policy provided for the payment of every dollar owing by the national and state governments; for lightening the burden by a simple funding scheme; for obtaining a national revenue by means of the present methods of imposts and excises; for facilitating business through the establishment of a national bank and for giving the country political and economic independence, by the adoption of a protective policy. He was thus the champion of public honesty. Various features of his scheme were hotly opposed, Jefferson being one of his most uncompromising opponents.

In the summer of 1792, Washington sent Hamilton a list of objections, prepared probably by Jefferson, to the financial policy of the administration. Hamilton answered them off hand, with his usual vigor and skill. One of the objections was that the owners of the debt were in the Southern, and the holders of it in the Northern section of the Union. What could be better than the reply of Hamilton.

"If this were literally true, it would be no argument for or against anything. It would be still politically and morally right for the debtors to pay their creditors."

The advocates of the protective system to-day base their argument on the claim that it raises wages. Hamilton's motives were higher; the strengthening of the Union, and time has justified his position. His regulation of the finances established public order. The national bank was the idea of his youth, and was intended to build up a strong party in the support of the government, holding the members together by the most powerful of all ties, a personal pecuniary interest. In other words, it was to bring property to the support of the government.

The charge has been made that he was a monarchist, but this rests upon his efforts to strengthen the national, at the expense of the state governments. On this point, Professor Anson D. Morse has these forceful words:

"When Hamilton retired from office, was the Federal government too strong? Has it been so at any subsequent time down to the close of the Civil War? Have the States at any time previous to 1865 been too weak to discharge the functions which properly belong to them? On the contrary, is it not true that within the period named, the public interests suffered oftener from defect of power in the national government, and excess of power in the States, than from excess in the former, and defect in the latter? And if, since 1865, centralization and consequent depression of the States may seem to any one to have proceeded too far, is not the evil traceable to a cause quite outside of Hamilton's policy? It is moreover a fair question whether the Union could have withstood the shock of secession, had it not been for the strength



which Hamilton gave to the national government."

As to what constituted the debt of the United States, there were wide differences, which precipitated the first political struggle in the United States. The total was about eighty million dollars, divided by Hamilton into the foreign debt, the domestic debt and the debts of the various states incurred during the Revolutionary struggle. There were no differences as to the foreign debt, and no one questioned the duty of paying the domestic debt, but the quarrel was as how and to whom it should be paid. The state debts aggregated twenty-five millions, and the views of those concerned seemed irreconcilable, for there was no end to the conflicting interests; but the result justified the sagacious policy of Hamilton.

One feature in the establishment of a national bank is too important to be overlooked. The opponents insisted that the Constitution forbade the creation of such an institution by the government. Hamilton met this argument by summoning the "Implied powers" of the Constitution to his support. The battle was transferred to the Cabinet, where he convinced Washington; and to-day his views are accepted by the majority of our countrymen. Years afterward, Chief Justice Marshall traversed the same ground and decided the question precisely as Hamilton had done. No achievement of the latter surpasses in importance, that of his calling into life, the implied powers of the Constitution. The summing up of his work as the first secretary of the Treasury, may be given in the eloquent tribute of Daniel Webster:

"He smote the rock of the national resources, and

abundant streams of revenue burst forth. He touched the dead corpse of public credit, and it sprang upon its feet."

One result of Hamilton's policy was the formation of the Federal party, who may be characterized as the supporters of a strong central government, in which the powers of the states were restricted to the distinct limits set forth in the Constitution, while their opponents, or Anti-Federalists, held the oppo-



Statue of Alexander Hamilton, Boston, Mass.  
The Gift of Thomas Lee.

site view. The coherence of the latter came from the unyielding aggressiveness of Hamilton. The Anti-Federalists concentrated their enmity upon him, the embodiment of "British" policy as they charged, the friend of aristocracy, whose dearest dream was the establishment of a monarchy in this country. It was even claimed

that this demoniacal magician had bewitched Washington himself, the very genius of sanity.

The elements of opposition crystallized around Jefferson, and called themselves Republicans. Their leader and Hamilton quarrelled, neither occupying a dignified position in the public prints. Washington appreciating the abilities of both, remonstrated. Hamilton stopped and Jefferson moderated, but did not cease his attacks, though he was more guarded.

Finally the enmity against Hamilton became so intense that Jefferson and Madison made a shameful attempt to drive him from the Cabinet, through charges of corruption. Their hope was that among the vast mass of complicated details in the placing of the foreign loan, some figures might be found that could be twisted into charges that implied wrong doing. It is impossible that they doubted Hamilton's integrity, but their great mistake was in misjudging the man, who, fully roused by the insult, laid bare all the operations of the Treasury. The resolutions of censure introduced in the House, received so beggarly a vote that it only emphasized Hamilton's vindication.

Magnificent as was the ability, and superb the patriotism of Hamilton, it would be a mistake to represent him as without fault, or as never making a blunder. In some of his quarrels he lost his temper. While he was a leader of leaders, winning where resistless logic and invincible truth required marshaling by a master hand, he was lacking in the qualities that make up a successful party organizer. He appealed to the intellect, rather

than the emotions. As has been said, he could never be a demagogue or rarely descended to the tricks of politics, while he made more enemies than friends. He resigned from the Cabinet January 31, 1795, because of the insufficiency of his pay, after his policy was successfully launched and in operation.

In 1800, he published a pamphlet, in which he aimed to prove that John Adams was unfit to be the presidential candidate of the Federal party, and closed by advising his party to vote for him. This unfortunately was not the only instance in which his personal enmity made him ridiculous. Adams had inherited his Cabinet from Washington, and at the beginning, the three most important members were unfriendly to him. They looked upon Hamilton as the head of the Federal party, and maintained close relations with him. Their letters betray a spirit which was treacherous and dishonorable, and would not have been tolerated for a single hour after its discovery by any of Adams's successors.

In his correspondence with these members, Hamilton aimed to obtain material to be used afterward in his attack upon Adams. This fact shows that he was subject to moods that were anything but creditable to him, the strongest proof being given in 1800, when he wrote an impetuous letter to Governor Jay, Federalist governor of New York, demanding that, in order to prevent the election of Jefferson to the Presidency, the legislature should be called together, with the purpose of choosing electors by the people in the districts, thus insuring a majority of the votes in the United States for a Federal candidate.

"In weighing this suggestion [wrote Hamilton], you will doubtless bear in mind that popular governments must certainly be overturned, and, while they endure, prove engines of mischief, if one party will call to its aid all the resources which vice can give, and if the other (however pressing the emergency) confines itself within all the ordinary forms of delicacy and decorum."

Governor Jay thoughtfully read this remarkable letter and then filed it away with the endorsement—

"Proposing a measure for party purposes, which it would not become me to adopt."

The masterful brain, bemuddled by personal enmity, and possibly by his health, which had suffered from the stupendous labor and strain of years, soon clarified. Jefferson and Burr were the opposing candidates, and the election was carried into the House of Representatives. None knew these two men better than Hamilton, and by throwing all his energies on the side of Jefferson, he saved his country from the indelible disgrace of having such a chief executive as Aaron Burr.

Returning to Hamilton's invaluable services for his country, it will be recalled that for a time, our foreign relations were in a critical state. England was still sour and sullen over our achievement of independence. She refused to send a minister to the United States; declined to receive ours; retained the western posts, because debts due her subjects remained unpaid, and let slip no opportunity for injuring our commerce. Lafayette was about the only Frenchman who was unselfish in his assistance to the colonies during the Revolution.



The motive of the others was more to injure England than to help us, and the reform which began in France, soon resolved itself into the most appalling revolution in the history of the world. The deep sympathy which Americans at first extended to the men struggling to free themselves from the worst tyranny conceivable, turned to horror when the hideous excesses made all mankind shudder. Citizen Genet landed at Charleston as the representative of the defiant revolutionary government, snubbed Jefferson and carried matters with a high hand.

Finally shots were exchanged on the ocean, and the Frenchmen, like the English in 1812, and the Spanish in 1898, learned that Americans are pretty certain to hit whatever they shoot at. War was so imminent, that President Adams summoned Washington from Mount Vernon, whither he sent his appointment as Commander-in-chief. The Father of his Country was an old man, but still ready as always to devote the last hour of his life and all his strength to the sacred cause that had engaged his youth and prime.

In accepting the appointment, Washington made the condition that he should not take an active part until the army was actually in the field, and he claimed the privilege of naming the officers who were to be next to him in rank, and to act as his staff. No request from so illustrious a source could be denied, and he sent to the President the names of three major-generals in the following order, Alexander Hamilton, Charles Pinckney and Henry Knox.

President Adams was angered when Hamilton was thus placed at the top rank, but he could do nothing less than submit the names to the Senate in the order called for by Washington. Having signed the commissions, Adams startled everybody by claiming that Knox took precedence, because of his rank in the revolution, disregarding the rule that such officers had always assumed rank in the order of their confirmation. Adams would not yield, and an unseemly quarrel was precipitated.

Knox and Hamilton, who had long been friends fell out and the former resigned. Pinckney was satisfied, and the President became more stubborn. The alarmed Federalists appealed to Washington who notified the President that unless his wishes were respected he would resign. This ultimatum brought Adams at once to terms.

It is impossible to make up a just estimate of the genius of Hamilton without a summary of his work during the brief period that he was the virtual head of the military forces of the United States. He began at once with his usual zeal and comprehensive grasp to prepare his country for the impending conflict with France.

His first task was to draft a plan for the fortification of New York harbor, the state having appropriated funds for that purpose. The work properly did not come within the scope of his duty, but there seemed to be nothing beyond the reach of his ability, and he completed it promptly and thoroughly. Then he met Washington and Pinckney in Philadelphia, and laid before them a scheme for the apportionment of officers and men among the states, for recruiting, for military supplies, for arse-

nals and for ordnance. Washington carefully examined the scheme and pronounced it as near perfect as it could be.

Having accepted it, Washington next scrutinized Hamilton's plan for the organization of the army, including the questions of pay, uniforms, rank, promotion, rations, regulations of barracks, the police of garrisons and camps, and in fact every detail. Although the plans were drawn up hurriedly, they received the fullest commendation of Washington.

When Congress came together, Hamilton submitted his bill entitled "An Act for the better organizing of the troops of the United States." The plan then existing was changed only so far as necessary, his aim being to establish a system that could be contracted or expanded, without affecting the form of the organization. The Senate adopted the bill as well as the one for a medical establishment.

In addition, Hamilton submitted plans for the classification and organization of the militia, for trade with the Indians and for military supplies, which were supplemented by circulars in the interest of discipline. In short, knowing the boundless capacity of Hamilton, the departments of the army, of the navy and the treasury relied upon him as their mainstay, and in no instance found they were leaning upon a broken reed.

While perfecting these elaborate details, Hamilton shaped the plans for the conduct of the war. Looking over the battlefield as a whole, he saw that the most effective way to strike France, was through Spain her ally,

then the owner of the vast territory known as Louisiana. By seizing this, the United States would secure the absolute control of the valley of the Mississippi. The idea was not a new one with Hamilton, who had foreseen and declared years before, that the free use of that great river was essential to the unity of the country. Regarding Louisiana and Florida, he wrote: "I have been long in the habit of considering the acquisition of those countries as essential to the permanency of the union."

Hamilton's view was that of the far-seeing statesman, as was proven a few years later when it fell to his rival Jefferson to carry his scheme to a full fruition. What Hamilton intended to secure by force of arms, Jefferson gained through purchase. While the credit goes to the third President, the scheme itself was Hamilton's.

Long previous to this, he had declared that the United States was destined to be the one dominant power in the western hemisphere. Our duty was to avoid all entangling alliances with European nations, and to enforce neutrality on their part regarding America. If this was not the Monroe Doctrine, formally declared years later, it certainly was the germ of it.

Francisco Miranda was a native of Caracas, South America, and helped the French forces in their campaign in aid of American independence. Returning to South America, he strove to incite a revolution among the Spanish troops over whom he was colonel. He escaped death by fleeing, and, in 1790, while in Paris was made a major-general by the Girondists. He fought against the Prussians, but achieved no marked success, and after

the fall of the Girondists fled to England. He was banished again by Napoleon in 1803, and went to New York, where he set on foot his second scheme for the overthrow of Spanish power in South America.

Hamilton was attracted by this soldier of fortune, and tried to interest our government in his schemes, which fitted so well with his own plans, but Miranda was entitled to little consideration, and in the end made an utter failure. There must have been much in the prospect of conquest and glory to fire the heart of Hamilton; but the eternal praise is his of subordinating all his ambitious schemes to the consolidation, expansion and good of his country. He was no Napoleon or Burr, but his heart glowed with a patriotism as exalted as that of Washington himself.

The interesting question already referred to remains, whether Hamilton possessed the qualities of a great general, like Washington or Grant. In personal courage, as has been shown, he had no superior. He was dashing, quick to take advantage of a mistake by an enemy, prompt to act in any emergency, resourceful and alert; but it was never his to command an army.

It has been said of Abraham Lincoln that had he received a military training, he would have made one of the foremost military leaders of the age. Judging Hamilton by the same test, the probabilities are that he would have proven equally great. Washington, the unerring judge of men, never would have selected him for the next in command to himself, had he felt any doubt of Hamilton's qualifications for the exalted office.



But France in her bloody delirium had glimmerings now and then of sense. She saw that in rousing the giant of the West, she had roused a foeman worthy of her steel. The preparations made by Hamilton for an armed conflict compelled her to pause.

The adroit Talleyrand felt it imperative to réestablish friendly relations with the government, that had been treated so cavalierly. In his usual roundabout way, he sent a message to President Adams, that France would be pleased to receive fittingly an American envoy.

Adams was delighted. Not only did this message promise peace, but it gave him the coveted opportunity of crushing the war party, and, best of all, of crippling his enemy Hamilton. He immediately nominated a minister to France. The plan of sending a single man to represent the United States at so critical a time was absurd, and, upon Hamilton's insistence, a strong commission was appointed. But for this, the Federal party would have been ruined and the country vastly injured. The war cloud soon passed away, though bitter memories remained, and Adams, through his own blindness and obstinacy, was defeated for the Presidency, and Thomas Jefferson, his Democratic opponent, elected as his successor.

The defeat of Adams for a second term and the disruption of the Federal party closed the public career of Hamilton. He had done a work for his country, which few even at this late day comprehend. His illustrious career had been blurred by errors, when he allowed his judgment to be clouded by his passionate dislikes; he had

blundered as a party leader, and sometimes he misunderstood his countrymen, but he was the foremost statesman of the early republic, whose patriotic devotion and transcendent abilities have never been surpassed by any who came after him.

Hamilton was now free to pursue his profession. He had given up a lucrative practice upon entering public life, and was a poor man, but his reserve capital of ability, reputation and self-confidence was greater than ever. Clients came to him by the score, and in a short time he was at the head of the bar in the metropolis of the country. He seemed to be surfeited with public life, though it was impossible for such a man ever to lose interest in politics.

Numerous incidents illustrative of his unequalled ability as a lawyer have come down to us. Many believed that whenever he threw his energies into a case, he could not fail to win. Judges and juries were swept resistlessly with him, and he had that peculiarity of genius, by which he impressed his hearers with the conviction that his view of a question was absolutely the right one. In his defense of an editor prosecuted for libel, his speech won this encomium from Chancellor Kent:

"It was the greatest forensic effort Hamilton ever made. He had bestowed unusual attention on the case, and he came prepared to discuss the points of law with a perfect mastery of the subject. There was an unusual solemnity and earnestness on his part in the discussion. He was, at times, highly impassioned and pathetic. His whole soul was enlisted in the cause. The aspect of the

times was portentous, and he was persuaded that if he could overthrow the high-toned doctrine of the judge, it would be a great gain to the liberties of this country. . . The anxiety and tenderness of his feelings, and the gravity of his theme, rendered his reflections exceedingly impressive. He never before in my hearing made any effort, in which he commanded higher reverence for his principles, nor equal admiration for the power and pathos of his eloquence."

The Federalist party crumbled to pieces after its defeat by Jefferson, but the halo that gathered round the head of their chief, who had never betrayed them, remained undimmed. Whenever called upon to act, he never refused. A man of his aggressive, intense character is either loved or hated; lukewarmness is impossible. Among the despicable adventurers whom Hamilton read at a glance was Aaron Burr. This man was an intriguer, with a pleasing presence, not a spark of moral principle and an insane ambition, that led him to stoop to any means to accomplish his ends. Burr was morally diseased through and through, as his public career abundantly proves.

Though Hamilton had quarreled with Jefferson, he preferred him as has been shown, a thousand times over to such a miscreant as Burr. Jefferson thoroughly distrusted his Vice President, and Burr saw his influence steadily waning, with certain ruin impending, unless by some audacious exploit he recouped his failing fortunes. He decided to do this by securing the governorship of New York. Behind such success loomed the phantom



Aaron Burr.  
Born 1756. Died 1836.

of a northern confederacy, with him as chief, for there were mutterings of secession among the New England leaders. That such was the dream of the arch traitor was proven by his course a few years later in the Southwest.

Hamilton's love for the Union was a passion that could be extinguished only by death. Reading the treasonable aims of Burr, he denounced them with all the burning fervor of his nature. The democratic nominee was Morgan Lewis, who had served in the Continental army, commanding at Stone Arabia and Crown Point. He was Chief Justice of New York when nominated for the governorship against Burr. Hamilton's denunciations of the latter were so scarifying that the Federalist vote was divided, and Lewis served as governor from 1804 to 1807.

All the venom in Burr was roused by this crowning defeat. He knew that Hamilton was the cause, and he determined to kill him. It would not do to stab him from behind or to hire some one to administer poison. Either method would have been vulgar, and the consequences to himself might be disagreeable, but he selected a method which essentially was fully as malignant in its nature.

He resolved to force a quarrel upon Hamilton; for the result of a duel, no matter which way it went, was preferable to his own impending ruin. If he fell, and he did not expect to fall, it would be the end of his worthless life. If he killed Hamilton, as he expected to do, the hatred of his countrymen could not equal the exultation that would be his, over the death of his execrated ri-





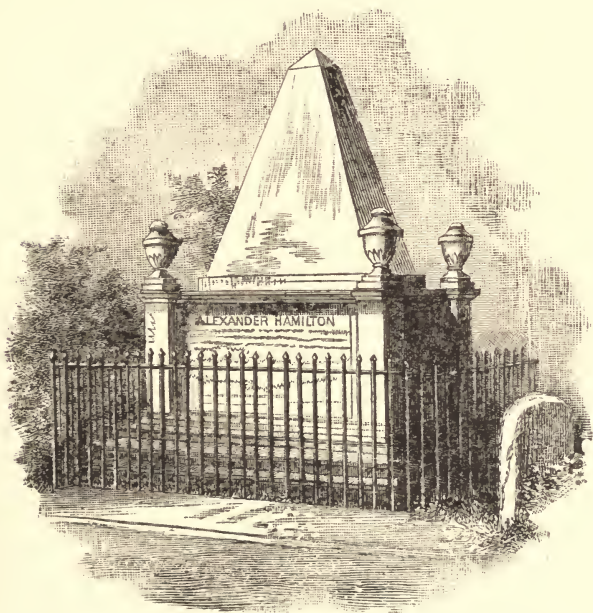
Duel between Hamilton and Burr, at Weckawken, N. J., July 11th, 1804.

val. Hamilton's criticisms of Burr were as violent in 1800 as four years later, but they were ignored in the former instance, as similar denunciations have been ignored by politicians in later days. That, however, mattered nothing. Burr selected some words attributed to Hamilton, at the time the caucuses were held for the gubernatorial nominations. These charges were of a public character, were not especially bitter, and were mild compared to what Hamilton had uttered more than once in previous political contests.

Hamilton acknowledged the validity of the "code of honor," so called. He was too manly to deny anything said by him, though directing attention to the fact that his words were uttered against the public character of Burr. The latter pressed him remorselessly, with the final result that the challenge was accepted, and an appointment for a hostile meeting was arranged to take place at Weehawken, New Jersey, on the banks of the Hudson, on the 11th of July, 1804.

Burr spent the interval between the acceptance of the challenge and the duel in elaborate pistol practice. A good shot at the first, he became an expert and was confident that, if he escaped Hamilton's fire, the latter would not escape his. Hamilton settled his business affairs, wrote farewell letters to his wife and then on a beautiful sunshiny morning in July went to his death. He was wounded mortally at the first fire, and discharging his weapon in air, was carried to his own home, where he lingered in agony for several hours, and died, surrounded by his stricken family.

The country was horrified. The press and pulpit denounced the deed that had robbed the United States of its most brilliant statesman, and the detestation of the brutal code was so widespread that duelling became more



The Grave of Hamilton, Trinity Churchyard, New York.  
(From "A Tour Around Old New York." Copyright, 1892, by Harper & Bros.)

unpopular than ever, though unhappily it was not wholly extinguished, the gallant Decatur falling a victim sixteen years later.

Senator Lodge, in his excellent life of Hamilton, discusses the question, Why did Hamilton accept the challenge of Burr? The conclusion reached by the author is

ingenious, but to us it seems forced. It is in effect, that Hamilton was haunted for years by his belief, that the weakness of the national government, the unrest of the masses, and the sympathy with France in her awful revolt would lead to a somewhat similar uprising in this country. An intense nationalist himself, a devotee of law and order, he felt that the army must be the mainstay and hope in the supreme struggle. That body would accept no leader against whose personal courage a whisper could be uttered. He considered himself as the man above all others to lead the army, and the mission could not be his, unless, figuratively speaking, he went to it with "clean hands." If he refused Burr's challenge, his enemies would charge him with lacking such courage. It would be fatal to his hopes, and, accepting his infinite self-confidence, disastrous to the country, when the decisive conflict took place between anarchy and order. Therefore, he felt impelled by a resistless impulse of patriotic duty to fight Burr.

This theory we repeat is ingenious and is fortified by extracts from Hamilton's correspondence, extending over a course of years. This proves that the great man's monumental mistake was in distrusting his countrymen, and in believing them capable of the horrible blunders of France; but a careful study of the character of Hamilton leads me to adopt a much simpler theory of his acceptance of Burr's challenge. Our belief is, that Hamilton fought Burr, because he lacked the moral courage to decline. An enemy of the code, his temperament was of the sort that promptly accepts challenges to duels.



He had demonstrated his intrepidity at Long Island when a boy, and at Yorktown when a young man. His deeds might have been tenfold more daring, and yet many who lacked his courageous qualities would have condemned him for refusing to fight Burr. There are circumstances, in which it demands more courage to refuse to fight, than it does to fight, and Hamilton was lacking in that higher courage which has led many a good man to his death.

But it is idle to discuss a question when no certain conclusion can be reached. Hamilton was dead, though his widow survived to her ninety-eighth year.

His masterful work was finished, and it remains only to add a few tributes from those who appreciated his genius.



Statue of Hamilton, in Central Park,  
New York.  
Presented by John C. Hamilton, 1880.



On November 23, 1880, a granite statue of Hamilton was unveiled in Central Park, New York, in the presence of members of the society of the Cincinnati, General Grant, Ex-Governor Bullock of Massachusetts, the Mayor of the city and many distinguished citizens. The statue was presented to the city by John C. Hamilton, a son of Alexander Hamilton. Some years later, a statue was unveiled in Brooklyn, and other cities have paid honors to the great man.

The distinguished Judge Ambrose Spencer said of Hamilton:

"Alexander Hamilton was the greatest man this country ever produced. I knew him well. I was in situations often to observe and study him. I saw him at the bar and at home. He argued cases before me while I sat as judge on the bench. Webster has done the same. In power of reasoning Hamilton was the equal of Webster; and more than this can be said of no man. In creative power Hamilton was infinitely Webster's superior. . . . . It was he more than any other man, who thought out the Constitution of the United States and the details of the government of the Union; and, out of the chaos that existed after the Revolution, raised a fabric every part of which is instinct with his thought. I can truly say that hundreds of politicians and statesmen of the day get both the web and woof of their thoughts from Hamilton's brains. He, more than any other man, did the thinking of the time."

Chancellor Kent, who understood Hamilton thoroughly, said:

"He rose at once to the loftiest heights of professional eminence, by his profound penetration, his power of analysis, the comprehensive grasp and strength of his understanding, and the firmness, frankness and integrity of his character. We may say of him, in reference to his associates, as was said of Papinian: "*Omnes longo post se intervallo relinquerit.*"

Talleyrand when in New York saw Hamilton at work in his office late at night and said of him:

"I have seen one of the wonders of the world. I have seen a man laboring all night to support his family who had made the fortune of a nation. I consider Napoleon, Fox and Hamilton the three greatest men of our epoch, and without hesitation I award the first place to Hamilton."



# ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

(1757-1804.)

BY G. MERCER ADAM \*

OF the group of eminent statesmen noted as the founders and champions of the American Government—including Hamilton, John Adams, Jefferson, Jay, Madison, Randolph, and Marshall—the name of Alexander Hamilton, of New York, shines perhaps the most conspicuous of all. As Washington's first Secretary of the Treasury, and an active and able participator in the War of the Revolution, his services to the young nation gave him high and well-deserved fame. But the chief distinction which he gained in his era is as the leading exponent and interpreter of the Constitution, and, with his notable colleagues, Jay and Madison, one of the most influential of the commentators on that great instrument of governing, in the pages of "The Federalist." Only subordinate to this fame of Hamilton is the admirable service he rendered as Secretary of the Treasury, in his statesman-like grasp of the finances of the young nation, and his wise management of its economic and fiscal policy, at a time of admittedly great difficulty in the national affairs. Nor do we forget his sagacity in counsel, his remarkable powers as a reasoner and debater, and his

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fine administrative ability, no less than his masterly career as one of the chief framers and ablest expounders of the Constitution. It is in the latter respect that he won, in our modern time, from the distinguished French historian and statesman, M. Guizot, that well-deserved tribute to his genius, when he affirmed that Hamilton "must ever be classed among the men who have best understood the vital principles and elemental conditions of government; and that there is not in the Constitution of the United States an element of order, or force, or duration, which he did not powerfully contribute to secure." Hamilton's tragic, early death, at the ruthless hand of the duellist-assassin, Aaron Burr, was a shocking and deplorable event, and just at the time when, in the maturity of his powers, he might, humanly speaking, have been of incalculable further service to his country and era, and perhaps given added distinction to the Presidency, by filling the high office as an incumbent of it himself.

Considering his manifold and great gifts, and his varied and valuable services to his country, it is painful to reflect that Hamilton had among his contemporaries not a few enemies; and that, despite his exalted personal character and his honorable career as a publicist and man of affairs. This was due, in large measure at first, to the inchoate condition of the country—the state of political chaos which succeeded the Revolutionary War—with, as yet, no central, dominant power; indeed, with no government other than that of the separate though now emancipated colonies, each either drifting into anarchy, or strenuously seeking for the possession of increased and out-

rivalling authority. In this condition of things, in the formative era of the Republic, when the opinions of even representative men were in a fluid and fluctuating shape, some manifesting, like Hamilton, and even Jefferson, decided aristocratic leanings; while the trend of others was towards democratic government, with a strong bias in favor of State Rights—naturally opposition was excited towards those, on either side, who sought to mould public opinion after their own beliefs, and at times in defiance of the desires and wishes of the majority. It was at this juncture that Hamilton came upon the political scene and endeavored to influence the mind of the time towards a strong central government, and a more efficient executive than was popular either with the several States or with their delegates in convention. Amid the contentions of the era—all centering in the great question whether the government should be federative or national—Hamilton stood out, and emphatically, for a strong, cohesive, and lasting Union, though one that should be marked by neither extreme of democracy or of aristocracy, for he saw danger in both extremes; and ably pointed out the evils likely to arise in any government that was not conservative and restrained, or that failed to appeal to the just instincts and enlightened minds of the better classes of the people.

For the rule of the majority, in the partisan's sense, Hamilton did not care nor pretend to care; there was in him none of the arts of the demagogue, no trimming as a public man, or wrong done to his conscience, in what he believed to be the best for his country; nor was there any disposition in Hamilton to bow to or cajole the populace—



the vice, especially, of a later political time—if it involved sacrifice of conviction, or injury done to his own high character and sense of what he conceived to be at once honorable, patriotic, and upright. It was this attitude of the man that won for him not only the confidence, but the respect and loving regard, of Washington, even after the rupture of their relations—a rupture caused by Hamilton's sensitiveness to criticism, and probably by his impatience, on his part as aide-de-camp and secretary, with his somewhat hasty, and at times exacting, yet always appreciative and kind-hearted, chief. His own ambition was also an influencing motive in leading Hamilton to resign his secretaryship under General Washington and withdraw from the subordinate though important position he held, to one of more scope and independence as a general in the field. It was this ambition in the man, coupled with a legitimate sense of his own value, that moreover led Hamilton afterwards to take to a legal career, and to those activities of his as a statesman, an expositor of the principles involved in shaping the constitutional and national policy of the country, and as an organizer and one who gave practical form to the various branches of the nation's executive, and lent his powerful aid as a counsellor and debater in the legislative arena. In these various ways, and in all the great services he was to render to the State, we see a man of high principle, sound judgment, and great political wisdom, as well as one possessed of unusual powers of convincing argument and lucid enunciation of the fundamental principles in the realm of government. To what greater heights, in the way of office, Hamilton, had he lived, would

have attained, it is now idle to speculate upon; but it was something, at such an era, to accomplish for his country in the tasks he was so ably to perform—especially as a moulder and defender of the Constitution and an adept in finance—and to win from his contemporaries the regard and admiration of the great statesmen of his time, with the esteem and veneration of posterity.

Who the interesting figure was, in the early history of the nation, that was to exercise such sway and command such respect from the leaders in the political life of his day, will have been learned from the Memoir, which precedes this Essay, from the instructive and entertaining pen of Mr. Edward S. Ellis. To give a measure of completeness in form to this independent, supplementary biography of Alexander Hamilton, it has been thought best, before proceeding with the narrative, to tell the story afresh from the beginning; though in doing so it is hoped that we shall not repeat much, or fail to give interest to the present sketch of the great statesman, by presenting it from some new points of view, and with equal admiration for the attractive historic subject of our theme.

By birth, Alexander Hamilton was a British subject, his father being a Scottish merchant in the island of Nevis, one of the West Indies group, near St. Christopher's, where the future American statesman was born, January 11th, 1757. From his mother, who was an attractive, high-spirited Frenchwoman, of Huguenot descent, the young West Indian, it is believed, inherited no little of the intellectual gifts and qualities—especially that alertness and sprightliness of mind—that afterwards distinguished him. From the father

obviously came, with some aspects of his sterling character, those features and marks of countenance and expression that betrayed his Scottish descent, including his light-colored hair, and bright, ruddy complexion, together with his studious habits and words of grave thought and reflection. Young Hamilton's life on his native island was a brief one, since, in early youth, he lost both his parents, and for a time we find him in Santa Cruz, in the office of a wealthy merchant there, who was a relative of his mother. On manifesting thus early unusual talents, this gentleman had the youth sent, in 1772, for an education to America, where, after landing in Boston, he was forwarded to correspondents of the merchant in New York, with instructions to have young Hamilton sent to school in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, with the view of preparing him for college. Such was the bright lad's precocity, that he was able, in his seventeenth year, to enter King's College, New York, now Columbia University, where his student career was so brilliant that we find him taking part in political discussions, writing essays and articles on current topics of moment, over the signature of "A Westchester Farmer," which were ascribed to such dignitaries as Governor Livingston and the president of the college.

The period (1774-76) was one of grave import to the American colonies, then, as all know, involved in serious difficulties with the mother country on the question of imperial authority and taxation. The unwise policy of England arose from the mistake of considering the settlements of the New World as colonial possessions, to be held solely for the financial benefit of England, and to enable her to

maintain her increased civil and military establishments in America, rather than for their own advancement and material well-being. The spirit of resistance had by this time begun to show itself, not only by the passing in the First Continental Congress, which met at Philadelphia in September, 1774, of a declaration of Colonial rights, and in the Second Congress (May, 1775) by the adoption of Articles of Union and Confederation, but by armed hostility, for the battles of Lexington and Concord, followed by that of Bunker Hill, was in the latter year fought, and Washington had been appointed commander-in-chief of the American forces in the field of strife. These events had their sequel, in 1776, in the Declaration of American Independence, on the one side, and on the other by the landing at New York of contingents of the English army under General Howe.

It was at this juncture in the affairs of the country he had now become a citizen and patriot of, that young Hamilton eagerly espoused the cause of freedom and actively took part in the struggle of the time. When only nineteen, he took command of a company of artillery which the New York Convention had ordered to be raised, and for the duties of which he had meanwhile been assiduously and patriotically preparing himself. His tactical efficiency in the drilling and disciplining of this troop, as well as his eager enthusiasm and proficiency as an officer, young as he was, attracted the notice of General Nathanael Greene, by whom he was ere long introduced and commended to General Washington. As an officer, the young West Indian saw considerable military service, taking part with his artillery company at the battle of Long Island (August, 1776),

where he distinguished himself in the retreat of the patriot army, as well as, later on, in the engagements at Harlem Plains, and in the grim fighting in New Jersey, at New Brunswick, Trenton, and Princeton. In the gloomy winter of 1776-77, when the army was encamped at Morristown, New Jersey, the keen eye of the commander-in-chief saw young Hamilton's alertness and decision of character, as well as his fine deportment and gallant bearing as a soldier, the result of which, added to the commendation of Nathaniel Greene, to which we have referred, was the offer by General Washington to place Hamilton on his staff as an aide-de-camp and to act as his private secretary. This offer the youth, at the age of a little over twenty, readily accepted, and he assumed his new duties, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

For success in his new rôle, in the service of the commander-in-chief, Hamilton had, as we have seen, many and various gifts as a speaker and writer, among them such as made him highly useful as the secretary, and even as the confidential adviser, of the general. Not only was he indefatigable in his zeal for the patriot cause, but he had that diplomatic *aplomb* which made him of great service in the delicate duties of his office, which, above all things, called for tact and discretion as well as ability. As a thinker and writer on the affairs of his country, Hamilton, moreover, had ere this shown his skill and the force of his genius. Besides the reputation he had gained while at King's College, Hamilton, it was known, had appeared to advantage on public platforms, particularly "in the fields" of what is now the City Hall Park, New York, where he addressed a



fervent speech to his audience on the subject of Colonial rights. He had also published his "Full Vindication," a forceful pamphlet in reply to Tory criticism of the Continental Congress, besides other disquisitions of a thoughtful and patriotic character. These and such-like manifestations of ability, and the command of a trenchant as well as of a ready pen, were qualifications which manifestly made him most useful to Washington, in conducting his important, multitudinous correspondence. He had, moreover, those qualities which, as Dr. John Lord, the historian and lecturer, has well said, "Secured confidence—integrity, diligence, fidelity, and a premature wisdom." He had brains and all those resources which would make him useful to his country. Many there were who could fight as well as he; but there were few who had those high qualities on which the success of a campaign depended. Thus, Hamilton was sent to the camp of General Gates, at Albany, to demand the division of his forces and the reinforcement of the commander-in-chief, which Gates was very unwilling to accede to, for at this period the capture of Burgoyne at Saratoga had turned his head. He (Gates) was then the most popular officer of the army, and even aspired to the chief command. So he was inclined to evade the orders of his superior, under the plea of military necessity. It required great tact in a young man of Hamilton's calibre to persuade an ambitious general to diminish his own authority; but Hamilton was successful in his mission, and won the admiration of Washington for his adroit management. He was also very useful in the most critical period of the war in ferreting out conspiracies, cabals, and intrigues; for such there were, even against

Washington, whose transcendent wisdom and patriotism were not then appreciated as they were afterward.

"The military services of Hamilton," continues Dr. Lord, "were concealed from the common eye, and lay chiefly in his sage counsels; for, young as he was, he had more intellect and sagacity than any man in the army. It was Hamilton who urged decisive measures in that campaign which was nearly blasted by the egotism and disobedience of Charles Lee (at the battle of Monmouth, in 1778.) It was Hamilton who was sent to the French admiral to devise a co-operation of forces, and to the headquarters of the English to negotiate for an exchange of prisoners. It was Hamilton who dissuaded Washington from seizing the person of Sir Harry Clinton, the English commander at New York, when he had the opportunity. 'Have you considered the consequences of seizing the general?' asked the aide. 'What would these be?' inquired Washington. 'Why,' replied Hamilton, 'we should lose more than we should gain; since we perfectly understand his plans, and, by taking him off, we should make way for an abler man, whose disposition we have yet to learn.' Such was the astuteness which Hamilton early displayed, so that he really rendered great military services without commanding on the field."

We have already referred to the rupture between Hamilton and Washington, which occurred in February, 1781, after the young secretary and aide had been for four years in close and intimate relations with the great chief. The cause that brought about separation and the resignation of the post held by Hamilton was nothing more than a hasty rebuke from the commander-in-chief, which the high-spir-

ited youth resented ; and hence we presently find him, though with the continued favor and regard of Washington, returned to the army in the field, with the brevet-rank now of general. In this capacity he displays once more his former ardor and courage in battle, and at this era took part in the closing engagement with the troops of the Motherland in the Yorktown peninsula. At this juncture in the protracted series of campaigns with the English forces, Cornwallis was being hemmed about by the armies of the young Republic, and Hamilton closed his military career by leading a successful assault on one of the redoubts of Yorktown. After this gallant exploit, and the war being practically over, Hamilton retired from the army to study law at Albany, and in the summer of 1782 was admitted to the bar and proceeded to New York to practice his profession and fulfill the duties of the office given him by the financier and statesman, Robert Morris, as Federal Receiver of Taxes. Later in the same year, he resigned the latter office, having been elected member of the Continental Congress, where he now began to shine as a legislator and debater and to take commanding interest in questions of Constitutional government and finance. Two years before this, and while still secretary to General Washington, Hamilton married the daughter of General Philip Schuyler, a lady of good birth and high intelligence, as well as of a greatly respected and influential family. His own ability and known rectitude of conduct and unblemished life soon won him high repute as a lawyer and brought him much and important professional business.

It was at this period of his career that Hamilton began

to make a name for himself as a statesman. The political situation at the era was full of menace and perplexity, for New York was yet full of Tories, whom, by the way, Hamilton spoke of and treated magnanimously and with no resentment, even to his prejudice in the eyes of those who had no sympathy for, but an abiding hatred of, "the Loyalists;" while the country at large was as yet ill-prepared to grapple with the problems which beset Government at the period. To Hamilton, as well as to Washington and other thoughtful and responsible men, the urgent need of the time was for a strong central government, with full authority to carry on successfully, and with credit, the affairs of the young Republic, and especially to determine the embarrassing question as to control over the several State Legislatures and, if possible, merge into national hands the general business of the nation. The first want was for a Federal Constitution, that would give the young State a charter of centralized government, with ample tho' well-defined powers and a recognized jurisdiction, and settle the great Constitutional question as to the authority of the Nation being greater than that of the State or any number of States. It was to this great and prime end that Hamilton bent his fine powers, after which he undertook the no less important task of grappling, in a masterly and comprehensive, far-seeing manner, with the matter of national finance.

Hamilton, we need hardly now say, rose to the emergency, and luckily for the country he had those gifts of intellect and phenomenal powers of mind and will that enabled him ere long to win what was wanted, and give to

the Republic a status among the nations, with a financial credit that would be unimpeachable, while knitting into one whole fabric the former loose Confederacy of States, and so evoke pride in one's common country. His course toward the attainment of his hopes was, however, a chequered one, for he had the hostility of many influential New York men, who, with Governor Clinton, was opposed to Hamilton's idea of a strong national government; while he had ever an aggressive opponent in Jefferson, who represented other ideas and with Patrick Henry handicapped the Constitution, when it came to be adopted, by various amendments. While a member of the New York Legislature, in 1786, he nevertheless succeeded in reaching the first stage of his desires, in being nominated one of five commissioners to the Annapolis Convention. The second and more productive stage reached, came in the call he had succeeded in bringing about to what is known as the Constitutional Convention, which met at Philadelphia in May, 1787, over which Washington himself presided. To that Convention, represented by nine States, Hamilton was named, though with opposition, as a member, with two others—Yates and Lansing—who, however, were henchmen of Governor Clinton, and hence opposed Hamilton and his project. Before that body, Hamilton made a speech of six hours' duration, in which he ably set forth, in his wonted comprehensive and far-seeing way, his views of the nature of the Constitution he deemed expedient for the country's needs, especially dwelling upon the efficiency of the executive part of the proposed instrument of governing, with a clear and luminous enunciation of fundamental principles. The model



he had evidently in view was the English one, to which his aristocratic notions largely leaned; while in some matters, notably in regard to slavery, the Constitution was a compromise, and tolerated the evil institution only for the sake of harmony and Union. He also astutely argued for neither extreme in governing, taking a middle way between autocracy and democracy, but insisting, above all, on the supreme authority of the central government, and the control, absolutely without interference on the part of the State legislatures, of the chief functional departments of the Federal power.

In his address in the New York ratifying convention, in June, 1788, "On the Expediency of Adopting the Constitution," Hamilton further explained his views and adroitly answered the objections to the instrument as one likely to interfere with local or State governing bodies, arguing very properly and frankly that "there must be a perpetual accommodation and sacrifice of local advantages to general expediency," and that local interests ought to give way to the broad interests of the Union. "While the Constitution continues to be read, and its principles known, the States," he affirmed, "must by every rational man be considered as essential, component parts of the Union; and therefore the idea of sacrificing the former to the latter is wholly inadmissible." He further advised the committee who were dealing with the matter "to remember that the Constitution under examination is framed upon truly Republican principles; and that, as it is expressly desired to provide for the common protection and the general welfare of the United States, it must be utterly repugnant

to this Constitution to subvert the State governments or oppress the people." Hamilton also argued for two distinct bodies in the general as well as in the local government, one the Senate, and the other the popular branch, which should represent the people. The chief point, in brief, which he however insisted upon was that the Federal government should possess the principle of strength and stability in its organization and be characterized by independence as well as by vigor in its operations.

The end of the deliberations—for argument and debate had already closed—was, as all know, the ratification by New York State of the Constitution, thanks in the main to Hamilton's impressive and convincing speeches and writings, with those of Jay and Garrison, afterwards compiled in the pages of "The Federalist." Its ratification, despite the alterations and amendments embodied, was naturally hailed as a great triumph, while it especially delighted Washington and Hamilton. It was indeed a happy consummation to the labors of the many able and distinguished men who had taken part in counsellings as well as in discussions over it and had finally brought about its ratification by the leading States of the Union. In securing its ratification by the other chief States, which tardily followed the lead of New York, Hamilton here again was, with his colleagues, instrumental, alike by his arguments and interpretation in the notable series of "The Federalist" papers. These "Federalist" essays, Mr. George Ticknor Curtis, the great legal writer and historian of the Constitution, has aptly affirmed, "gave birth to American Constitutional law, which

was thus placed above arbitrary construction and brought into the domain of legal truth."

With the ratification of the Constitution came the organization of the Government, and the election of Washington as first President of the United States and that of John Adams as Vice-President. Washington took the oath of office April 30, 1789, more than a month after the date originally set for the assembling of Congress, owing to the tardy coming together of a quorum of both Houses of the first Congress to count the electoral votes. At this period we now near the next incident of moment in Hamilton's career. This was his appointment in Washington's first Cabinet to the office of Secretary of the Treasury; while the rival leader in the after-political parties of the era was the U. S. Minister to France, the distinguished drafter of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson, who was named Secretary of State. The three other executive departments at this time were those of the War department, the department of Justice, and the Post-office—the Postmaster General, for the present, being outside the Cabinet or advisory body of the President.

When Hamilton accepted the Secretaryship of the Treasury, he was but thirty-two years of age, but, as we shall see, he was gifted with the powers of a great administrator and able, soon after the assumption of his arduous and responsible duties, to present to Congress, as it had been asked for, an elaborate report on the public credit. The national finances at this period were in a chaotic condition, and the debt to be dealt with amounted to \$54,000,000, including overdue interest. Of this large sum, a fifth was owed

abroad, while the bulk of the whole—the domestic debt—was due in the main to those who had furnished the much needed supplies for the Revolutionary army, or to those, chiefly the soldiers, who had rendered personal service to the Nation. To meet these obligations, where payment pressed, and to provide for the running expenses of the National government and for further contingencies, the Secretary of the Treasury showed not only sound sense, but the practical mastery of the science of finance, and to that degree that the credit of the new government of the nation was secured. Part of the debt was funded, while taxation was resorted to, but so wisely as to fall uncomplainingly upon the people and mollify those who were averse to the notion of the Federal government, with its necessarily large expense and the centralization of power. Other problems Hamilton at this time had to deal with, such as the assumption of certain portions of the State debts, besides the adjustment of questions involved in raising a revenue from excise, and those arising from the need of a National Bank, of a permanent seat for the Federal government, and the adoption of a protective policy to aid the nascent industries or those likely to arise. On most of the schemes propounded by the Treasury Secretary, its chief naturally met with opposition and much hostile criticism, which, among other results, led to the formation of parties, and even threatened the continuance of the Secretary of the Treasury in office. Varying views on financial questions and other controverted topics of the time, as we have said, led to party affiliations, besides the withdrawal of Madison's support of Hamilton, and to the rise of the poli-

tical parties, then known as Federalists and Republicans, with all the bitterness and rancor to which they gave rise. Sick of all this, though he ever fought effectively for his own hand, Hamilton resigned office at the end of January, 1795, and anew took up the practice of his profession, and at New York became once more the leader of the Bar.

On withdrawing from his official duties, Hamilton's influence and his prominence in politics continued, for though he had many enemies, such as Jefferson, Clinton, and Aaron Burr, he had the respect, and even admiration, of all independent minds, and of those particularly who knew his great intellectual ability and high moral worth. In power of mind he far surpassed most of his contemporaries, and as a thinker he was profound as well as logical; while he continues to-day to be the admiration of our greatest statesmen. His genius as a financier and statesman, together with his great services in the army, are now perhaps more highly recognized and appreciated than in his own day; though even in his own time he was deemed an intellectual prodigy and rated as next in rank to the illustrious Washington. Of him, Charles Francis Adams has eloquently and forcibly said, that "among all the remarkable men of the Revolution, we know of no one who, for the attributes which usually mark genius, was more distinguished. He was endowed with a singularly comprehensive mind, which enabled him to originate forms of government and systems of administration, whilst he united with it an intrepidity and an energy equal to the task of putting them in execution." Alas! that so splendid a career should have been



so wantonly and cruelly cut short at the early age of forty-eight.

We now near the tragic end—an end, however, that but served the more ardently to endear him, even in death, to all, and preserve his memory to coming generations as the first and most truly patriotic of statesmen, who was a martyr to his own high, though mistaken, sense of honor. In the rivalries and heated controversies of his day, we have already mentioned that Hamilton and Aaron Burr were political antagonists; and we know that Hamilton had no love for either the man or the methods of him who was Washington's colleague in office. Burr's political aspirations, Hamilton had constantly thwarted, and he had, it seems, ill-advisedly spoken of him as a man to eschew and beware of. He had, moreover, used his influence to keep Burr from receiving an appointment on a foreign mission; he had also secured his defeat when his rival was a candidate for the governorship of New York; and now (1804) when a new incumbent of the office of President of the United States was sought for, Hamilton threw his influence in the scale against him. To a man of Burr's temper and character, these hostile acts of Hamilton rankled bitterly in his breast; and when his integrity was impugned and derogatory things were said of him by Hamilton, nothing would satisfy Burr but a challenge to combat, for his adversary was not the man to withdraw any opinion he had honestly expressed or give his challenger other satisfaction in the way of retraction or apology. The hideous resort of the period was then only to the duel, and though Hamilton was reluctant to have recourse to this,

and meant, whatever happened, to throw away his fire rather than kill or even wound his adversary, he decided to appear on the duelling ground, and, with no malice in his heart, magnanimously give Burr the satisfaction he sought. The sad issue of the affair came all too soon and tragically, for the combatants met at Weehawken, N. J., at daylight on July 11, 1804, and the great statesman fell mortally wounded at Aaron Burr's first fire. General Hamilton lingered, more or less unconscious, to the following day, when he passed resignedly from earth, surrounded by his loved wife and seven sorrow-stricken children. The sorrow of the nation at the loss of the great man was as universal as it was profound; and on the fourteenth day of July he was given a public funeral at New York, where in the churchyard of Trinity church, Broadway, his remains were interred.

The horror and grief of the country at the illustrious man's ill-starred fate was feelingly expressed by Gouverneur Morris in an eloquent eulogy at the tomb; while keen and outspoken was public resentment against Burr, insomuch that he fled for his life—the future of which was a pitiful though a deserved one, of practical outlawry, contumely, and ostracism.

## ON THE EXPEDIENCY OF ADOPTING THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION.

Speech by Alexander Hamilton, in the Convention of New York, June 24, 1788.

I AM persuaded, Mr. Chairman, that I in my turn shall be indulged, in addressing the committee. We all, in equal sincerity, profess to be anxious for the establishment of a republican government, on a safe and solid basis. It is the object of the wishes of every honest man in the United States, and I presume that I shall not be disbelieved, when I declare, that it is an object of all others the nearest and most dear to my own heart. The means of accomplishing this great purpose become the most important study which can interest mankind. It is our duty to examine all those means with peculiar attention, and to choose the best and most effectual. It is our duty to draw from nature, from reason, from examples, the best principles of policy, and to pursue and apply them in the formation of our government. We should contemplate and compare the systems, which, in this examination, come under our view; distinguish, with a careful eye, the defects and excellencies of each, and, discarding the former, incorporate the latter, as far as circumstances will admit, into our Constitution. If we pursue a different course and neglect this duty, we shall probably disappoint the expectations of our country and of the world.

In the commencement of a revolution, which received its birth from the usurpations of tyranny, nothing was more natural than that the public mind should be influenced by

an extreme spirit of jealousy. To resist these encroachments, and to nourish this spirit, was the great object of all our public and private institutions. The zeal for liberty became predominant and excessive. In forming our Confederation, this passion alone seemed to actuate us, and we appear to have had no other view than to secure ourselves from despotism. The object certainly was a valuable one, and deserved our utmost attention. But, sir, there is another object equally important, and which our enthusiasm rendered us little capable of regarding: I mean a principle of strength and stability in the organization of our government, and vigor in its operations. This purpose can never be accomplished but by the establishment of some select body, formed peculiarly upon this principle. There are few positions more demonstrable than that there should be in every republic some permanent body to correct the prejudices, check the intemperate passions, and regulate the fluctuations of a popular assembly. It is evident that a body instituted for these purposes must be so formed as to exclude as much as possible from its own character those infirmities and that mutability which it is designed to remedy. It is therefore necessary that it should be small, that it should hold its authority during a considerable period, and that it should have such an independence in the exercise of its powers as will divest it as much as possible of local prejudices. It should be so formed as to be the center of political knowledge, to pursue always a steady line of conduct, and to reduce every irregular propensity to system. Without this establishment, we may make experiments without end, but shall never have an efficient government.

It is an unquestionable truth, that the body of the people in every country desire sincerely its prosperity; but it is equally unquestionable, that they do not possess the discernment and stability necessary for systematic government. To deny that they are frequently led into the grossest errors by misinformation and passion, would be a flattery which their own good sense must despise. That branch of administration especially, which involves our political relations with foreign States, a community will ever be incompetent to. These truths are not often held up in public assemblies, but they cannot be unknown to any who hear me. From these principles it follows, that there ought to be two distinct bodies in our government: one, which shall be immediately constituted by and peculiarly represent the people, and possess all the popular features; another, formed upon the principle and for the purposes before explained. Such considerations as these induced the Convention who formed your State Constitution, to institute a Senate upon the present plan. The history of ancient and modern republics had taught them, that many of the evils which these republics had suffered, arose from the want of a certain balance and mutual control indispensable to a wise administration; they were convinced that popular assemblies are frequently misguided by ignorance, by sudden impulses and the intrigues of ambitious men; and that some firm barrier against these operations was necessary; they, therefore, instituted your Senate, and the benefits we have experienced have fully justified their conceptions. . . .

Gentlemen, in their reasoning, have placed the interests of the several States and those of the United States in con-



trast ; this is not a fair view of the subject ; they **must** necessarily be involved in each other. What we apprehend is, that some sinister prejudice, or some prevailing passion, may assume the form of a genuine interest. The influence of these is as powerful as the most permanent conviction of the public good ; and against this influence we ought to provide. The local interests of a State ought in every case to give way to the interests of the Union ; for when a sacrifice of one or the other is necessary, the former becomes only an apparent, partial interest, and should yield, on the principle that the small good ought never to oppose the great one. When you assemble from your several counties in the Legislature, were every member to be guided only by the apparent interests of his county, government would be impracticable. There must be a perpetual accommodation and sacrifice of local advantages to general expediency ; but the spirit of a mere popular assembly would rarely be actuated by this important principle. It is therefore absolutely necessary that the Senate should be so formed, as to be unbiased by false conceptions of the real interests, or undue attachment to the apparent good of their several States.

Gentlemen indulge too many unreasonable apprehensions of danger to the State governments ; they seem to suppose that the moment you put men into a national council, they become corrupt and tyrannical, and lose all their affection for their fellow-citizens. But can we imagine that the Senators will ever be so insensible of their own advantage, as to sacrifice the genuine interest of their constituents ? The State governments are essentially necessary to the form

and spirit of the general system. As long, therefore, as Congress has a full conviction of this necessity, they must, even upon principles purely national, have as firm an attachment to the one as to the other. This conviction can never leave them, unless they become madmen. While the Constitution continues to be read, and its principle known, the States must, by every rational man, be considered as essential, component parts of the Union; and therefore the idea of sacrificing the former to the latter is wholly inadmissible.

The objectors do not advert to the natural strength and resources of State governments, which will ever give them an important superiority over the general government. If we compare the nature of their different powers, or the means of popular influence which each possesses, we shall find the advantage entirely on the side of the States. This consideration, important as it is, seems to have been little attended to. The aggregate number of Representatives throughout the States may be two thousand. Their personal influence will, therefore, be proportionately more extensive than that of one or two hundred men in Congress. The State establishments of civil and military officers of every description, infinitely surpassing in number any possible correspondent establishments in the general government, will create such an extent and complication of attachments, as will ever secure the predilection and support of the people. Whenever, therefore, Congress shall meditate any infringement of the State Constitutions, the great body of the people will naturally take part with their domestic representatives. Can the general government withstand

such a united opposition? Will the people suffer themselves to be stripped of their privileges? Will they suffer their Legislatures to be reduced to a shadow and a name? The idea is shocking to common-sense.

From the circumstances already explained, and many others which might be mentioned, results a complicated, irresistible check, which must ever support the existence and importance of the State governments. The danger, if any exists, flows from an opposite source. The probable evil is, that the general government will be too dependent on the State Legislatures, too much governed by their prejudices, and too obsequious to their humors; that the States, with every power in their hands, will make encroachments on the national authority, till the Union is weakened and dissolved.

Every member must have been struck with an observation of a gentleman from Albany. Do what you will, says he, local prejudices and opinions will go into the government. What? shall we then form a Constitution to cherish and strengthen these prejudices? Shall we confirm the distemper, instead of remedying it. It is undeniable that there must be a control somewhere. Either the general interest is to control the particular interests, or the contrary. If the former, then certainly the government ought to be so framed, as to render the power of control efficient to all intents and purposes; if the latter, a striking absurdity follows; the controlling powers must be as numerous as the varying interests, and the operations of the government must therefore cease; for the moment you accommodate these different interests, which is the only way to set the

government in motion, you establish a controlling power. Thus, whatever constitutional provisions are made to the contrary, every government will be at last driven to the necessity of subjecting the partial to the universal interest. The gentlemen ought always, in their reasoning, to distinguish between the real, genuine good of a State, and the opinions and prejudices which may prevail respecting it; the latter may be opposed to the general good, and consequently ought to be sacrificed; the former is so involved in it that it never can be sacrificed.

There are certain social principles in human nature from which we may draw the most solid conclusions with respect to the conduct of individuals and of communities. We love our families more than our neighbors; we love our neighbors more than our countrymen in general. The human affections, like the solar heat, lose their intensity as they depart from the centre, and become languid in proportion to the expansion of the circle on which they act. On these principles, the attachment of the individual will be first and forever secured by the State governments; they will be a mutual protection and support. Another source of influence, which has already been pointed out, is the various official connections in the States. Gentlemen endeavor to evade the force of this by saying that these offices will be insignificant. This is by no means true. The State officers will ever be important, because they are necessary and useful. Their powers are such as are extremely interesting to the people; such as affect their property, their liberty, and life. What is more important than the administration of justice and the execution of the civil and criminal laws?

Can the State governments become insignificant while they have the power of raising money independently and without control? If they are really useful; if they are calculated to promote the essential interests of the people; they must have their confidence and support. The States can never lose their powers till the whole people of America are robbed of their liberties. These must go together; they must support each other, or meet one common fate. On the gentleman's principle, we may safely trust the State governments, though we have no means of resisting them; but we cannot confide in the national government, though we have an effectual constitutional guard against every encroachment. This is the essence of their argument, and it is false and fallacious beyond conception.

With regard to the jurisdiction of the two governments, I shall certainly admit that the Constitution ought to be so formed as not to prevent the States from providing for their own existence; and I maintain that it is so formed; and that their power of providing for themselves is sufficiently established. This is conceded by one gentleman, and in the next breath the concession is retracted. He says Congress has but one exclusive right in taxation—that of duties on imports; certainly, then, their other powers are only concurrent. But to take off the force of this obvious conclusion, he immediately says that the laws of the United States are supreme and that where there is one supreme there cannot be a concurrent authority; and further, that where the laws of the Union are supreme, those of the States must be subordinate; because there cannot be two supremes. This is curious sophistry. That two supreme powers cannot act



together is false. They are inconsistent only when they are aimed at each other or at one indivisible object. The laws of the United States are supreme, as to all their proper, constitutional objects; the laws of the States are supreme in the same way. These supreme laws may act on different objects without clashing; or they may operate on different parts of the same common object with perfect harmony. Suppose both governments should lay a tax of a penny on a certain article; has not each an independent and uncontrollable power to collect its own tax? The meaning of the maxim, there cannot be two supremes, is simply this—two powers cannot be supreme over each other. This meaning is entirely perverted by the gentlemen. But, it is said, disputes between collectors are to be referred to the Federal courts. This is again wandering in the field of conjecture. But suppose the fact is certain, is it not to be presumed that they will express the true meaning of the Constitution and the laws? Will they not be bound to consider the concurrent jurisdiction; to declare that both the taxes shall have equal operation; that both the powers, in that respect, are sovereign and co-extensive? If they transgress their duty, we are to hope that they will be punished. Sir, we can reason from probabilities alone. When we leave common-sense, and give ourselves up to conjecture, there can be no certainty, no security in our reasonings.

I imagine I have stated to the committee abundant reasons to prove the entire safety of the State governments and of the people. I would go into a more minute consideration of the nature of the concurrent jurisdiction, and the operation of the laws in relation to revenue; but at

present I feel too much indisposed to proceed. I shall, with leave of the committee, improve another opportunity of expressing to them more fully my ideas on this point. I wish the committee to remember that the Constitution under examination is framed upon truly republican principles; and that, as it is expressly designed to provide for the common protection and the general welfare of the United States, it must be utterly repugnant to this Constitution to subvert the State governments or oppress the people.

# THE UNUSUAL AND REMARKABLE

## IN THE LIFE OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

BY B. J. CIGRAND, M. S., D. D. S.\*

OF all the distinguished men who took part in the building of this republic, none have a career filled with more peculiar events than Alexander Hamilton. His life contains so many strange and unusual incidents that it can be truly said he had a wonderful record.

There is little or nothing known of his ancestors other than that his father was a Scotchman and his mother was French. He was born at Nevis, West India, in 1757, and was an orphan at an early age. By birth he was a British subject, though his sympathies were, in early life, with the land of the fleur-de-lys. He spoke and read English and French, though he preferred the latter when pursuing his studies.

A mere incident caused him to come to America; there had been a terrible storm on the Island, and young Hamilton, a lad of fourteen, so vividly described the hurricane that his friends and relatives decided he should attend school in the American Colonies. Pursuant with this intention he was sent to Elizabeth, New Jersey, where he attended a private school and in one year had mastered sufficient points in the sciences and literature to admit him to King's

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(Columbia) College. At the time of his matriculation he was but sixteen years of age. The following year he made an address on Colonial Grievances, before a popular assemblage in New-York city, and his remarks attracted not only Colonial but international attention.

In the following year we find him organizing a company of artillery and hardly had the war of Independence begun when Washington observed the genius of Hamilton and appointed him his aid-de-camp. In this capacity, Hamilton, a mere boy of nineteen, took charge of the great and important correspondence of Gen. George Washington, and not infrequently this youth edited and revised the documents prepared by Washington. Leaving the dignified station of private secretary of the commander-in-chief, he took command of a troop at Yorktown, where he displayed great military tact. After the war he gave his time to law and shortly we find him in the legislative halls and dictating the policy of government and directing the Federal Convention. He practically shaped the destiny of our Federal Government. It was his unanswerable arguments which made it possible to have the Constitution adopted and it was his devotion to its meaning which changed a confederacy into a nation.

Of him, the lines of Byron may be fittingly applied:

“There are deeds which should not pass away  
And names which must not wither.  
The spirit of a single man  
Makes that of multitudes take one direction  
As roll the waters to the breathing wind.”

It was Hamilton who wrote most of the letters of the *Federalist* which contained the arguments of many distinguished patriots, who favored the adoption of the Constitution, and among those who fearlessly championed the purpose of this document were Hamilton, Jay, Madison and Randolph; though the latter and Mason wrote much in the style of a critique. What Thomas Paine's "Crisis" was to pre-Revolutionary times the *Federalist* was to the pre-Constitutional Government. If the letters of these giants of free government had not been published the people could not have become intelligent of the character of the Constitution, and the present Constitution would never have been adopted.

While in the tents as soldier in the Revolution, Hamilton conceived the idea of a nation—not a confederacy. It was in September of 1780 that he wrote to Duane, a member of Congress, and expressed his opinion regarding state sovereignty and national supremacy. He was then twenty-three years of age and his letter certainly indicates a mature mind relative to civic conditions. In this letter he proposed a call of all the states and arrange a convention authorized to enact laws calculating a central and supreme power, deriving its authority from the delegates from the several Colonies or States. He said: "Some of the lines of the army, but for the influence of Washington, would obey their States in *opposition* to Congress—Congress should have complete sovereignty in all that relates to war, peace, trade, finance, foreign affairs, armies, fleets, fortifications, coining money, establishing banks, imposing land tax, poll tax, duties on trade, and the unoccupied lands."



He added: "The idea of an uncontrollable sovereignty in each State will defeat the powers of Congress and make our Union feeble and precarious." Think of a youth making these proposals and predicting the State rights—issues as early as 1780, and take into consideration the lives and suffering of the war of '61 to establish that which Hamilton so clearly foretold when a lad in the struggling continental army.

Mr. Hamilton has been criticised by many writers for having objected to offering of prayer at the Federal Conventions. His critics have made it appear that he was irreligious and did not believe in Divine aid, when the facts in the case prove quite the opposite.

The motive which prompted Mr. Hamilton to object to Dr. Franklin's motion asking that some clergyman be invited to open the meetings with prayer was not understood until the recent publication of the private notes and memoranda of Mr. James Madison. These items and observations made by Mr. Madison during the stormy days of the Federal Convention throw new light on the matter in question.

Mr. Madison made extensive notes regarding the proceedings of this great body and his writings began with Monday, May 14th, 1787, and end with Monday, September 17th, 1787. During these weeks the delegates labored with the most perplexing proposition that ever confronted a people seeking self-government. The diversity of opinion and the diversity of interests seemed to foreshadow that the several Colonies would not unite on some plain fundamental basis of federal government. And it was during a severe

verbal seige that Dr. Franklin made the following address, which deserves to be incorporated in this sketch:

“Mr. President: The small progress we have made after four or five weeks’ close attendance and continual reasonings with each other, our different sentiments on almost every question, several of the last producing as many Noes as Ayes, is methinks as melancholy proof of the imperfection of the human understanding. We indeed seem to feel our own want of political wisdom, since we have been running all about in search of it. We have gone back to ancient history for models of government, and examined the different forms of those republics, which, having been originally formed with the seeds of their own dissolution, now no longer exist; and we have viewed modern states all around Europe, but find none of their constitutions suitable to our circumstances.

“In this situation of this assembly, groping, as it were, in the dark, to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our understanding? In the beginning of the contest with Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for divine protection? Our prayers, sir, were heard; and they were graciously answered. All of us, who were engaged in this struggle, must have observed frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor. To that kind Providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace the means of establishing our future national felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful friend? or do we im-

agine we no longer need his assistance—I have lived, sir, a long time; and the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, That God governs in the affairs of men! And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured, sir, in the Sacred Writings, that ‘except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.’ I firmly believe this: and I also believe, that without his concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel: we shall be divided by our little partial local interests, our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a byword down to future ages. And what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing government by human wisdom and leave it to chance, war and conquest.

“I therefore beg leave to move, that henceforth prayers, imploring the assistance of heaven, and its blessing on our deliberations, be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business; and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service.”

Mr. Sherman seconded the motion and this brought the matter before the convention; a most heated debate followed. Dr. Franklin’s private notes on the Convention include his address favoring prayer, and in his note-book, referring to the motion, he made memoranda of Col. Hamilton’s objection to prayer, but did not explain on what grounds Hamilton refused to vote for the motion. The reader naturally would be inclined to the belief that Hamilton’s objections were of an irreligious character.

The writings of James Madison clear the subject of any such intentions, and the following from Madison is of great interest :

“Mr. Hamilton and several others expressed their apprehensions, that, however proper such a resolution might have been at the beginning of the Convention, it might at this late date and day, in the first place bring on it some disagreeable animadversions; and in the second, lead the public to believe that the embarrassments and dissensions within the Convention had suggested this measure. It was answered by Dr. Franklin, Mr. Sherman and others that the past omission of a duty could not justify a further omission; that the rejection of such a proposition would expose the convention to more unpleasant animadversions than the adoption of it; and that the alarm out of doors that might be excited for the state of things within would at least be as likely to do good as ill.

“Mr. Williamson observed that the true cause of the omission could not be mistaken. The convention had no funds.

“Mr. Randolph proposed, in order to give a favorable aspect to the measure, that a sermon be preached at the request of the convention on the Fourth of July, the anniversary of Independence; and henceforth prayers, etc., to be read in the Convention every morning. Doctor Franklin seconded the motion. After several unsuccessful attempts for silently postponing this matter by adjourning, the adjournment was at length carried, without any vote on the (Franklin or Randolph) motion.”

These lines from the pen of Madison make it possible to understand Hamilton's attitude relative to Franklin's motion.

The debates relative to the proposed constitution were indeed heated arguments and in many hamlets throughout the States differences of opinion were settled with sword and pistol.

Among the many who took issue with Col. Hamilton on matters pertaining to the new constitution was one Eleazer Oswald, Revolutionary patriot and man of distinction. He was especially antagonistic to the Hamiltonian idea of government and severely criticised the proposed Federal Constitution. Mr. Oswald so bitterly assailed the arguments of Hamilton that the latter gave offense, which called for adjustment. Oswald sent a challenge to Hamilton and matters were about to be arranged when the duel was averted through the interference of the friends of both gentlemen.

This was the first challenge sent Hamilton, and it illustrates the tendency of those times, to adjudicate differences and affairs of honor by "lead or steel."

In the latter part of 1797 a sharp and unfriendly letter was received from James Monroe, and Hamilton in replying did not definitely state his position regarding a certain controversy and Monroe sent him a challenge to fight a duel. The letter from Monroe indicated an anxiety to meet Hamilton on the field of combat, and stated in his letter of challenge that Col. Aaron Burr would deliver the letter and make all arrangements for the duel. It seems strange that Burr should be a part of this affair. Can it be that he fanned the flame which he thought would mean the destruction of Hamilton? Did he encourage Monroe to enter upon this event, and is it not possible that his dislike for Hamilton even at this early date induced him to agitate



the differences between Hamilton and Monroe until they had developed into a quarrel and thus necessitated a challenge to a duel?

Not all of the correlated correspondence can be found, but sufficient evidence is extant to show that Aaron Burr was instrumental in effecting arrangements for a duel between these two distinguished statesmen. Hamilton's reply to the proposed duel cannot be found and the cause for abandoning the duel is not known. The letter of Monroe is not a part of the published accounts of Monroe, Hamilton or Burr. James Monroe's letter read as follows:

"PHILADELPHIA, Aug't 6th, 1797.

"Sir:—I do not clearly understand the import of your letter of the 4th instant and therefore desire an explanation. With this in view I will give you an explanation of mine which preceded it.

"Seeing no adequate cause by anything in our late correspondence why I should give a challenge to you, I own it was not my intention to give or even provoke one by anything contained in those letters. I meant only to observe that I should stand on the defensive, and receive one in case you thought fit to give it. If, therefore, you were under a contrary impression, I frankly own you are mistaken. If, on the other hand, you meant this last letter as a challenge to me, I have then to request that you will say so, and in which have to inform you that my friend Col. Burr, who will present you this, and who will communicate with you on this subject, is authorized to give my answer to it and to make arrangements as may be suitable in such an event. I am, with due respect, your obt. servant.

JAMES MONROE."

The lives of Morris and Hamilton are so completely yoked that a knowledge of the one is an understanding of the other. Strange as it may seem, they were both born on foreign soil and are the greatest examples of enthusiastic patriotism found among the adopted sons. Both came to this country when mere boys and both became the recognized financiers of the day.

But to Robert Morris, more than to any other individual, Hamilton owes his fame as a national character. It is true Hamilton displayed tact and demonstrated his statesmanship while an aide-de-camp to Gen. Washington, but the latter, though admiring the talents of Hamilton, rather believed him indiscrete, hasty in judgment and high spirited in temper; and Washington admired Hamilton for his daring disposition but disliked his impulsive moods. To Morris we must look for the causes which gave Hamilton weight in the political world of the New Republic. Though the general histories and biographies do not credit Morris with great influence in this particular, yet a few facts have been gathered which clearly indicate the strength of the Morris character.

Personal histories tell of the life and career of this remarkable man more thoroughly than any of the volumes of general information, and the story is one full of deep interest. Robert Morris was a remarkably well informed man, rivaling, indeed, in general intelligence, the sage of those times, Benjamin Franklin.

Some of the biographers have written statements seemingly intended to convey the impression that Washington thought little of the counsel of Morris, and that in later

years a coolness existed between them. Careful investigation, however, will show that these two Revolutionary patriots were the closest of friends. Few incidents demonstrate this relation better than the fact that when Mrs. Washington journeyed from Mount Vernon to take possession of the first executive mansion in New York, Mrs. Morris accompanied her from Philadelphia, and when they arrived in New York harbor they were met by General Washington and Robert Morris. The writings of the Morris family all show how close and sincere was this friendship, but they prove another thing of much interest to those who like to delve into the records of the past and search out the truth. That is, that Mrs. Washington, in spite of the numerous histories containing full descriptions of her appearance at the inaugural ceremony and the subsequent ball and dinner, and even vivid pictures of the costumes she wore on those occasions, was not at the inauguration at all, and did not rejoin her husband till four weeks afterward.

Regarding many of the most interesting things in the history of our country the government possesses no official records. It remains for us to gather the story of nearly all these occurrences from private diaries and correspondence of those who lived and moved through the stirring scenes of our Revolutionary period.

From Maclay, that eccentric continental, we can gather much in this way that is of the greatest interest.

Washington was always a faithful friend of Robert Morris, and it was the political influence and the motion of the latter that made him president of the federal convention

which formulated the government under which we live to-day.

The act of Martha Washington in burning all the private correspondence of members of her family deprived her country of a great mass of interesting material, but those communications of her own written to Mrs. Morris and still preserved throw a new light on many topics of historic interest.

There was not a man of continental times who did more for Washington or befriended him so repeatedly than Robert Morris.

Our nation during its formative period required aid of every description—moral, patriotic and financial—and this latter need was not the least important. To Robert Morris, more than to any other man connected with the Revolution, this nation is indebted for financial assistance and counsel, rendered at a time when the fortunes of the Colonials were at a very low ebb, and when money, as much as blood and bravery, meant everything to the success of the struggle.

Though he was born across the sea, he was a loyal patriot. At an early age, his great thirst for knowledge led him to a full appreciation of the influences of toleration and liberality, and though he stood out against the adoption of the Declaration of Independence he did it on the ground that the Colonies were not sufficiently prepared for so terrible a conflict.

But when he heard the earnest words of John Adams and Benjamin Franklin he eagerly subscribed his name to the sacred document, and afterward showed by his acts how loyal a son of the new nation he was.

Once satisfied that the Colonies had a fighting chance, he threw himself heart and soul into the work. Without his wonderful ability as a financier and his enthusiasm for the cause it is not improbable that the Colonials would have been forced to submit and the new government destroyed.

When all seemed lost, and the soldiers of the Revolution, ragged and starving, saw nothing but defeat and despair ahead of them, he opened his coffers and personally contributed \$1,400,000 to what seemed to all a lost cause. It was this magnificent gift of Morris' that made the victory of Trenton possible. He stayed in Philadelphia, braving the enemy, continually sent information to Washington, and beggared himself for the army, even exhausting his personal credit after his money had gone—credit at that time far more powerful than that of the Continental Congress itself. The name of "Bobby Morris" was on the lips of every soldier of America in those days.

It was this character of a man who could rightly ask favors of Washington, and the latter fully appreciated the goodness and greatness of Morris.

When General Washington was about to select his cabinet he offered the portfolio of Secretary of the Treasury to Morris, but it was declined. Washington pressed his offer, but when it was refused a second time he permitted Morris to name the man.

This was showing an unusual regard for the judgment of Morris and explains fully the friendship existing between Washington and Morris. The nature of the cabinet position was one, deserving the most careful student of financial



affairs, and Robert Morris did not search long to find the individual whom he thought competent and acceptable. While Mr. Morris was the financial agent of the Continental government he became intimately acquainted with a promising young man; he learned to value the suggestions of the young and aspiring gentleman. This youth had taken an active part in the formation of the new machinery of self-government and had repeatedly given evidence of deep knowledge of political affairs. This gentleman was the close bosom friend of Morris and he eagerly sought an opportunity of aiding so ambitious a citizen. These gentlemen had grown closer as their acquaintance extended and when Gen. Washington urged Mr. Morris to nominate the first Secretary of the Treasury he presented the name of Alexander Hamilton.

The suggestion was rather a surprise to Washington, as it was the purpose of the president-elect to have at his council board men of mature age; ministers who had learned to hesitate; heads of departments who deliberated calmly.

But Mr. Morris appointed Hamilton—and Washington true to his proffer accepted the nomination.

Hamilton was at that time but thirty-two years of age and under present existing circumstances could not have become an adviser to the President of the United States. The succession act passed under the Cleveland administration makes the cabinet members eligible to the presidency, in the event of death or inability of the president, vice-president and secretary of state; hence according to the Constitution which reads: No person shall "be eligible to that

office who shall not have attained the age of thirty-five years."

Although Hamilton was the junior member (in age) of the cabinet he was the senior in point of influence.

So far as Washington's first cabinet was concerned, it was not a happy expedient, for two more irreconcilable political thinkers than Jefferson and Hamilton never met around a common council-board. As Jefferson once said: "We are pitted against each other like game-cocks." Randolph the Attorney-General sided with Jefferson and Knox, the Secretary of War voted with Hamilton; thus leaving Washington obligated to decide between them; this generally meant that Hamilton was the victor. When it came to questions requiring constitutional interpretation Hamilton was especially well informed, since he was a delegate to the convention which formulated the basic law, and Jefferson not being present was considerably out of touch with the spirit of the Convention. This latter element made Jefferson weak, in just such points where Hamilton was strong.

The year 1796 brought to the mind of George Washington a proposition which disturbed him considerably. His second term as chief executive of the young nation was drawing to a close and the people were anxious he should accept a third term; the eminent statesman and the American citizens eagerly sought information on this interesting topic; the population in all sections of the country favored the idea of continuing him in office. Washington had gained the individual confidences of the masses and the tone of his personal mail and the general character of the news-

paper contributions indicated a cheerful disposition toward the third term project.

The proposition demanded the earnest and most sincere deliberation of Gen. Washington. Personally he was weary of the "tasks of state," yet he felt kindly disposed to remain in the office of President. The people were restless and there was a spirit abroad which expressed the thought that the young republic would degenerate without him who was "first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

To meet the demands of the hour and declare himself on so delicate a problem needed reflection. Washington seldom seemed hurried and he took especial pains to delay this answer to the people's interrogation. After considering the matter he decided it required advice from those high in the esteem of the people and he chose to learn the exact status of affairs before he would venture giving his final reply. He well knew that the answer must be decisive and that the general tone of the document must be in sincere terms and in strict accord with the unwritten meaning of the organic law. He desired that it should contain logic and clear argument and felt it an excellent opportunity to advise or warn the people of impending dangers, to portray the past and in a measure predict the future and lend such force to republican government as his eight years in office exemplified. These were the basic ideals he desired the answer to contain.

But the great Washington, admired by all the world for his wisdom, felt his lack of capacity to satisfactorily deal with the problem. He regretted that Mr. Hamilton was

no longer a part of his official family,—Hamilton having resigned in January of 1795—yet he might be induced to lend his aid. Washington rested his mind when Hamilton consented to assist in the labors of this paper of national—yes, international concern. Hamilton quickly realized the needs of the address; he was familiar with the notes of Gen. Washington and could readily clothe these mere frames into gorgeous characters. Hamilton learned the meaning of Washington's brief comments years before when a secretary to the great Revolutionary commander, and thoroughly understood the true meaning of all requirements.

Washington issued this memorable letter, known as his "Farewell Address," September 19th, 1796. It was received as a master stroke and throughout the world admired for the candor and clearness of statement. No issue was avoided, no problem dodged. All received the generous consideration of one filled with honor, patriotism and Christian fortitude. The statesmen of the times pronounced it of such merit that it was placed on a par with the Declaration of Independence, as regards its expression of Americanisms.

The following communication sent by Hamilton to Washington, corroborates the foregoing:—

"New York, May 10th, 1796.—Sir: When last in Philadelphia, you mentioned to me your wish, that I should redress a certain paper, which you had prepared. As it is important, that a thing of this kind should be done with great care, and much at leisure, touched and retouched, I submit a wish, that, as soon as you have given it the body you mean it to have, it may be sent to me."

This letter was written by Hamilton about four months before the address was published and indicates the interest he took in this matter. Of course we would all be deeply concerned in the solution of the problem "Did Hamilton dictate the real policy of this great state paper." Possibly the future may bring an answer; if it does it will probably come from private correspondence.

But the fact is established that Hamilton labored on the paper, that he edited it, and gave it the rhetorical character; and Hamilton impressed Washington with the importance of nationalizing issues. The testimony of Mr. John Jay is added, since he was concerned in the Farewell Address. This valuable letter was written to Richard Peters and can be found in *Memoirs of Historical Society of Penn.*, Vol. I, page 249. It reads:

"Some time before the address appeared," he says, "Colonel Hamilton informed me that he had received a letter from President Washington, and with it the draft of a Farewell Address, which the President had prepared, and on which he requested our opinion. He then proposed that we should fix on a day for an interview at my house on the subject. A day was accordingly appointed, and on that day Colonel Hamilton attended. He observed to me in words to this effect; that, after having read and examined the draft, it appeared to him to be susceptible of improvement; that he thought the easier and best way was to leave the draft untouched, and in its fair state, and to write the whole over with such amendments, alterations and corrections as he thought advisable, and that he had done so. He then proposed to read it and to make it the subject of our con-



sideration. This being agreed to, he read it and we proceeded directly to consider and discuss it, paragraph by paragraph, until the whole met with our approbation. Some amendments were made during the interview, but none of much importance.

"Although this business had not been hastily dispatched, yet aware of the consequence of such a paper, I suggested the giving it further critical examination; but he declined it, saying he was pressed for time, and was anxious to return the draft to the president without delay."

It is from this source that we gather the facts of Hamilton's aid in the construction of the Washington valedictory.

This great document, which to-day stands as a Resolution of National Conduct, was the conjoint work of Washington and Hamilton. Just how much or to what extent Mr. Hamilton elaborated, or what amendments he suggested, will possibly never be known. His own writings as well as those of Washington fail to indicate the nature of the individual work. Sufficient knowledge of Hamilton's contribution is not extant to warrant a statement further than to say "Hamilton assisted in preparing the 'Farewell Address' " of General George Washington.

It is claimed by those opposing the Hamiltonian idea of our government that he had no faith in the common people; that he favored the idea that an aristocracy should be the ruling element in our nation. This does Hamilton an injustice and does not weigh much in the minds of any who fully realize the meaning and purpose of his state papers. It is indeed remarkable that the essence of our Declaration of Independence written by Jefferson in these lines, "all

men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights," are contained in an essay written by Hamilton several years prior to July, '76. The Hamilton lines are:

"All men have one common origin; they participate in one common nature, and consequently have one common right."

These words do not indicate his spirit other than truly democratic, and they were written when a mere lad of seventeen years. These lines are taken from Hamilton's pamphlet entitled: "A Full Vindication and the Farmer Refuted." The thought is precisely the same as expressed by Jefferson, and though the wording is different there exists a most striking similarity.

In the same essay by Hamilton, written and published in 1774, are these words: "No reason can be advanced why one man should exercise any power or pre-eminence over his fellow-creatures unless they have voluntarily vested him with it." Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence makes a like statement: "That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

The strength and influence of the brilliant Hamilton, at the Federal Convention, is generally underestimated. Notwithstanding the fact that the form of government as outlined by Hamilton did not appeal to the delegates, it was his diplomatic mind which realized the situation and he readily accepted the tone of the convention and became a powerful factor in the draught as submitted by Madison—"The father of the Constitution." In other words Hamil-

ton was able to make victory out of severest defeat, and it was this quality in the character of Hamilton which made him an able champion and attorney for the delegates when the product of the convention came before the people for their judgment.

Hamilton showed his wisdom of political affairs in many instances, but when the question of the Executive branch of the government was before the delegates he gave evidence of statecraft seldom demonstrated at any similar gathering.

He was of foreign birth and the disposition of the times read "Let none but Americans on guard." He was fully conversant with the spirit of opposition to foreign interference or foreign dictation. The new constitution—so the people wished—should declare in clearest possible terms that the president of the new Republic be a native born citizen. And it was right that the people's voice be respected in all matters since it was to be a government of the masses. To overcome the prejudice of the foreign born and hold the good will of all concerned required tact and shrewdness of the highest character.

Tradition brings it that Hamilton had ambitions, and that he thought it possible to become the chief executive of the new nation. Nothing appears in the records of the convention to this effect, but Hamilton had great influence with Madison and convinced the latter that the service of the Revolutionary soldiers, regardless of their nativity, should be shown every measure of respect possible. And the idea appealed to the liberal-minded Virginian. Hamilton did not allow so delicate a matter to be brought before

the entire convention; he chose to get every victory possible in committee meetings and avoid the uncertainties of a huge gathering of delegates.

The Madison draft favored the suggestion and hence there is, or was at that time, a possibility for a person of foreign birth to become the President of the United States. The clause on this important subject reads:

*5th Clause.* No person except a natural-born citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen years a resident within the United States.

This may be largely presumption on the part of the writer, but there are a number of things which assist in arriving at such a conclusion. The last lines of the clause indicate that Hamilton had his own personality in view when the word "*fourteen*" was inserted. It is possible that it was mere coincidence, but it nevertheless remains a fact that up to the time of the construction of the Constitution Hamilton had been in this country just fourteen years. He was born at Nevis, West Indies, on January 11th, 1757, and came to the Colonies in 1772. The time of the convention was about fourteen years after this date.

Again the word "resident" in the last line also indicates that care was exercised in terms fitting the life and career of Hamilton. He had been a resident fourteen years but had not been a citizen such a period of time. But the most weighty argument in connection with this subject is the fact that Alexander Hamilton did expect to be chief execu-

tive, as careful investigation will prove, and it is only reasonable to suppose that he was the controlling factor in framing the clause relating to the presidency.

An expression of his presidential aspirations can be found in a pamphlet published by Hamilton early in the third presidential campaign. This document issued in 1800, intended as a political argument, was aimed against John Adams. This pamphlet clearly portrays his personal ambition. The purpose of the document was to show that Mr. Adams lacked executive ability and was unfit for so exalted a station. His closing sentences teem with sentiments of the politician rather than the statesman Hamilton; he made it known that he was a candidate and suggested that the Federal party support him.

This document contributes to the supposition that Hamilton aspired to the presidency.

The Federal party did not favor such a proceeding and the election resulted in declaring Adams the executive. Hamilton was bitterly opposed to Adams' policy and he dictated the party terms notwithstanding that he was outside the cabinet. Hamilton's influence with the Adams councilors was so marked that they looked to Hamilton for advice and direction—this was a most remarkable feature of the Adams administration, and nowhere in our national history do we find a parallel.

It may not have occurred to many Americans that, notwithstanding that Hamilton was of foreign birth, he acted in the capacity of commander-in-chief of the American army. This is a position belonging particularly to the executive of our land, and though Hamilton never filled the



Since of president he did occupy the dignified capacity of commander-in-chief. In 1797 a treaty with England known as the Jay treaty involved the United States in a difficulty with France which threatened to break forth into a war with America's colonial allies. Adams was president and he anxiously sought a settlement and peaceable understanding with France, but matters became more complicated as time advanced and an extra session of Congress passed bills which became laws arranging for coast defense and army and navy equipment. The union of States expressed the wish that Gen. Washington, though in retirement as a private citizen, take command of the forces as he did during the struggle for liberty. Washington would not consent—he felt his age and general condition of health would not admit of so severe a mental and physical strain; but the people and the officials at the Federal Capital implored him to once more serve the country. Finally Washington agreed, but on one condition, namely: Alexander Hamilton must be made second in command and made to assume the actual task of the chief. The matter was placed before Congress and passed and with the approval of Adams; the work of recruiting and planning fell to the hands of Hamilton.

The war was on and every department of our defense was rapidly completing preparations. Hamilton was eagerly surveying the situation, and suddenly the news was dispatched by messengers that Washington was seriously ill and shortly the sad tidings came that the great General was dead. Hamilton being second in command now became the commander-in-chief. The diplomacy of Napoleon Bonapart presented further hostilities and military tactics gave way

to diplomatic correspondence. Nevertheless, Alexander Hamilton was for a brief period commander-in-chief of the United States Army. John Adams was relieved, as President, of the great responsibilities of the war, yet he hoped to continue in the office of national executive, and had he been able to have won the confidence and esteem of Hamilton he would have been re-elected.

Hamilton had gone back to his law practice in New York, but he wielded a most emphatic influence on the Federal party and without his support Adams could not hope to win the election.

Alexander Hamilton opposed the re-election of Adams and the campaign was a fierce battle of words. The result was that Jefferson and Burr received an equal number of votes and according to the constitution it devolved on the House of Representatives to decide the contest. The House favored the election of Burr and the Federal forces were about to join and give the executive office to Aaron Burr, when Hamilton realizing the error of such an action decided to prefer the downfall of his party rather than see it succeed with such a political intriguer as Burr. The presidency depended on the judgment of Hamilton. What to do and how to do it became a vital question in the great mind of Hamilton. He disliked the democracy of Jefferson and his antagonism grew when he reflected to the days of his quarrels with Jefferson while both were in Washington's cabinet. Finally Hamilton decided that of "two evils choose the lesser," and in his earnest and enthusiastic manner advocated the election of his political opponent Jefferson. When the Federalists learned of this strange attitude they

scarcely knew what course to pursue, but Hamilton proclaimed a principle which should deserve serious consideration of all true citizens, namely: "The office of president must be filled by the best man" even though his party affiliations are less desirable.

Hamilton elected Jefferson. The Democrats ought to be truly grateful to the patron saint of the Republican party for this patriotic act; and the entire nation regardless of party should praise this policy of Hamilton since it defeated a low, vicious and compromising character—Aaron Burr.

This political move on the part of Hamilton, aroused in the heart of Burr a spirit of revenge and every opportunity was sought to entangle Hamilton into some questionable deed or provoke him to speak a word of insult or slur—hence admitting of Burr sending a challenge to fight a duel. The time came for Burr to take advantage of the situation, and true to the adage "If you seek for trouble you will surely find it." The term of Vice-President Burr had about ended, and he realized he could not be elected president or re-elected vice-president again, consequently he turned his attention to the governorship of New York. And he believed if Hamilton remained quiet or even neutral he would easily carry the State. But Hamilton, who was a fearless and upright patriot, would not remain inactive nor would he sanction the idea of making peace with culprits by surrendering his station as a clean and honest party leader. In the memorable campaign Hamilton allowed it to be known that Burr must be defeated and his friends and admirers accepted the command—the result was the political death of Aaron Burr. During the campaign Hamilton in an un-

guarded moment said in the company of a few people that he entertained a "despicable" opinion of that man Burr. This conversation was repeated to Burr, who seized it as possible grounds for a duel, and immediately entered into correspondence with Hamilton and impressed the latter with the necessity of a "decision of honor."

The bright, intelligent and far-seeing Hamilton, who foretold the destiny of a nation and whose knowledge of its constitutional law was the most profound of that day—this same brilliant and remarkable mind could not fathom the design of the intriguer and cold-hearted Burr. Or if he did understand the seriousness of an "affair of honor," his bravery, and heroic courage so often displayed while a soldier in the Revolution, must have forsaken him. Hamilton knew it was unchristian, ungentlemanly and thoroughly out of accord with his sense of moral right, to fight a duel, but he did not possess the courage to proclaim his objection to a system of "barbaric court" and in an unwilling and hesitating mood he allowed himself to subject himself to this humiliation.

This same cowardice—mistaken for a form of bravery—leads hundreds across the sea to yield up a noble and praiseworthy career to gratify the lowest impulse within the human heart.

Hamilton was not ignorant of the terribleness of the undertaking, since he had suffered its effects in the loss of his eldest son who a few years before fell dead on the selfsame spot where he and his enemy Burr were to meet. This sadness was fresh in his mind—yet he lacked the great moral courage of refraining from a practice brought down

from barbaric times. The Hamilton family had sustained the loss of one of its members in a duel and the sadness which took possession of the father had not passed away.

Young Philip Hamilton, a youth of eighteen, fought a duel at Weehawken, New Jersey, on January 10th, 1802. In defense of his father's honor he challenged G. J. Eaker, who, during an oration on July 4th, took occasion to attack Alexander Hamilton and aimed ferocious invectives, to injure the reputation of the famous American. Young Philip, who had just graduated from Columbia University, attended the Independence celebration and heard the slurring remarks against his father. A few months afterward young Hamilton met the speaker at a theatre and the nature of the conversation drifted to a point where Philip felt impelled to take exception and arrangements were shortly completed to fight a duel. The duelists met and though four shots were exchanged neither person had been injured. Young Hamilton was so dissatisfied at this termination of the case that he arranged to reopen the affair by sending a second challenge to Mr. Eaker, who immediately accepted and the second duel resulted. The combatants fought with pistols at twelve paces distance. Philip Hamilton was mortally wounded at the first shot, and after suffering agonies for some ten hours, died surrounded by his admiring friends.

This sad lesson should have inspired Alexander Hamilton to refuse a duel with Burr.—But the times decreed that matters of personal difference or affairs of honor must be settled on the field of duel.



Hamilton recorded his views on the practice of duelling and condemned it in strongest terms; but regarding the acceptance of a challenge he wrote: "The ability to be in future useful, whether in resisting mischief or affecting good in those crises of our public affairs which seem likely to happen, would probably be inseparable from a conformity with prejudice in this particular."

The duel was arranged and the two bitter political opponents met. The sturdy figure of Burr registered firmly on the soil, and the cool and deliberate Burr eagerly awaiting the fulfillment of a longing desire; he had been engaged for months in secret pistol practice and every detail of the duel had been carefully planned by his designing mind.

Opposite to Burr stood the small, thin and even puny figure of Hamilton, who stood erect as a soldier, displaying a dignified and courtly attitude. His active mind controlled his physical being which responded in quivers of nervousness; his diligent study and extreme hardships as the first secretary of the treasury had robbed his cheeks of their bloom and his delicate frame had lost much of its natural agility.

The time was called—the tragedy was on—and in a scene of few moments was enacted the most tragic duel of the century. The end had come and the civilized world mourned the loss of one who stood staunch in the halls of justice and fame.

The grief of Mrs. Hamilton was intense, and her love for the young husband was of that depth that she wore the "crape of sorrow" for one-half century, when death brought solace to her stricken heart.

The entire civilized world felt the shock of the tragic death of Hamilton and this sacrifice practically destroyed the nefarious practice of the duel; henceforth the "code of honor" reverted into a "code of his honor" and only moral cowards resorted to the sword and pistol.

If the death of Hamilton meant the end of duelling, then his was indeed a truly heroic death—liberating the world from the claims of heathendom.

A man need not be the native of the soil to be a patriot; far from this and often, yes too often, do we find that those born beneath our banner are less deserving of citizenship than those who from choice have landed on our shores. Those emigrants who have torn themselves loose from tyranny and in the dark of night left the land of oppression, sailed over the angry bosom of the sea to land on these shores must ever be deserving of our respect. They who gladly subscribe themselves to our laws and who unhesitatingly take the oath of allegiance to our starry ensign; who freely serve the cause of liberty and cheerfully abide by our laws and remain God-fearing citizens, such are healthy additions to our population and are worthy of our admiration.

Although nativity is an important and desirable factor in the proper spirit of patriotism it is not a necessary accompaniment. This is well exemplified in the lives of Morris and Hamilton. Let it be remembered that an adopted citizen, all things being favorable, is quite as likely to be as patriotic as the native born; and it is to be regretted that the latter too unfrequently realizes the great blessings which God has bequeathed him. The pages of our nationality too

fully illustrate the truth of this assertion to need further detail.

There are those who love to designate patriotism as a selfish propensity and who are ever prepared to bring discredit upon all movements calculated to foster patriotism and loyalty.

Patriotism, as all who are familiar with its definition know, means quite the contrary from selfishness; it stands for humanitarianism and sacrifice. The lives of Nathan Hale, Robert Morris, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton clearly exemplify the high virtues of its impulse.

**ANECDOTES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF HAMILTON.****DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN HAMILTON AND WASHINGTON.**

A few weeks after the marriage of Hamilton, on the 16th of February, 1781, a somewhat singular and disagreeable incident occurred between himself and the Commander-in-chief, which exerted some influence on his future career.

He had now been nearly four years in the family of Washington, as his aid-de-camp. He had secured, by his superior abilities and integrity, the first place in his confidence. But the position had always been one in some respects disagreeable to Hamilton, inasmuch as it placed him in a state of dependence on the will and subject to the caprices of another.

On the day just mentioned a breach occurred between them which put an end to this relation, though between men of such intelligence and such integrity it could not diminish their mutual confidence and respect. The incidents of the dispute were these; and trivial enough they were to have led to such important consequences.

Washington and Hamilton passed each other on the stairs at the headquarters of the army, then located at Morristown, in New Jersey. The general said he wished to speak to Hamilton. The latter answered that he would wait on him immediately.

Hamilton went below and delivered a letter of importance to Mr. Tilghman, which was to be sent immediately to the Commissary, as it contained an order of the most pressing nature. As Hamilton reascended the

stairs he was met by General Lafayette. The latter detained him a few moments in conversation.

When Hamilton reached the head of the stairs he met General Washington, who had left his own apartment and come forward to accost him.

He exclaimed in an angry tone:

"Col. Hamilton, you have kept me waiting for you these ten minutes. I must tell you, sir, you treat me with disrespect."

Hamilton replied:

"I am not conscious of it, sir; but since you have thought it necessary to tell me so, we part." "Very well, sir," responded Washington, "if it be your choice."

Such was the cause of this unfortunate difficulty.

The truth was that Washington, harassed by ten thousand cares, had in a moment of thoughtlessness given



Hamilton in the Field.



way to a little petulance which was quite excusable; and that Hamilton, wearied with the disagreeable dependence which always attends the position and functions of an aid-de-camp, determined to embrace the opportunity thus afforded to put an end to a relation which he had long endured only from patriotic and disinterested motives, and from a powerful attachment to the person and career of Washington.—*Schmucker*.

#### HAMILTON THE PEN OF THE ARMY.

To Hamilton alone Washington confided the most difficult and elaborate communications which emanated from headquarters, both to Congress and to private citizens, which he did not himself compose. "The pen of our army," says Troup, "was held by Hamilton; and for dignity of manner, pith of matter, and elegance of style, General Washington's letters are unrivaled in military annals."

#### HAMILTON AND THE FEDERALIST.

"The Federalist" is justly regarded as the great American classic in political science. No production which has emanated from any American statesman can compete with it in profundity, ability and power.

The great constitutional arguments of Mr. Webster, and the elaborate treatise of Mr. Calhoun on the Constitution, are its acknowledged inferiors. It holds the same high place in American literature which the letters of Junius, and the Reflections of Burke on the French Revolution, occupy in British literature; while it possesses one great advantage over these celebrated works, in the

fact that their discussions are based upon transient and temporary events, which, however important and absorbing they may have been at the period of their occurrence, lost their supreme and overwhelming interest with the steady progress of time.

"The Federalist" is founded upon a theme equally permanent and glorious—one which will continue to interest and benefit our race as long as true liberty exists upon the earth: and not only as long as the American confederacy shall continue to flourish, but even while it retains a place in the memory of mankind.

It is a complete commentary upon the Constitution of the United States, which is fully worthy of its subject. It is a magnificent superstructure erected in perfect harmony with the symmetrical and beautiful proportions of the foundation upon which it is reared, and destined to be coequal with it in duration and celebrity.

The first publication of "The Federalist" began in the daily journals in November, 1787, and it continued till June, 1788. It attracted universal attention at the time; and to the influence which it wielded, the speedy and unanimous adoption of the federal Constitution by all the States, is in a great measure to be attributed.

Its general scope and purpose were to afford the American people, at the period when they were discussing the provisions and merits of that Constitution previous to its final adoption—a thorough exposition of the principles which should characterize a federal representative government.

It combines in harmonious proportions an ardent

tachment to the principles of national liberty, with a clear and impartial statement of the dangers which result from an excessive and undue jealousy of the power intrusted to the central government, in those unsound and badly constructed republics which, in former ages, have arisen, flourished, foundered and fallen; and it draws lessons of wisdom from their misfortunes.

Or, in the words of Hamilton himself: "I propose to discuss the following interesting particulars: the utility of the Union to your political prosperity; the insufficiency of the present confederation to preserve that Union: the necessity of a government at least equally energetic with the one proposed, to the attainment of this object: the conformity of the proposed Constitution to the true principles of republican government: its analogy to your own State constitution: and lastly, the additional security which its adoption will afford to the preservation of that species of government, to liberty and to prosperity."—*Schmucker.*

#### APPRECIATION ABROAD OF THE FEDERALIST.

The wise and learned of Europe have also appreciated the superior merit of this production. Shortly after its first appearance, "The Federalist" was translated into French by M. Buisson, and published in Paris.

In that country it has taken its place by the side of Montesquieu's "Spirit of Laws."

It has been republished in Switzerland, and has been there honored as the worthy associate of the great work of Burlamaqui on the same subject.

It is known and appreciated in every country of Europe, just in proportion as the liberty of the press and liberty of speech are possessed and enjoyed.—*Schmucker*.

#### HAMILTON AND ANDRÉ.

In reference to the fall of the British officer, André, who was involved in the punishment which Arnold deserved, Hamilton, moved by a generous sympathy for the fate of one so young, so chivalrous, and so promising, exerted his utmost efforts to discover some legal and honorable expedient to save him.

When all proved unavailing, he felt deeply for the unfortunate officer, and published a narrative of the facts in the case, in a letter to his friend Laurens, which reflects equal credit, both upon his intellect and his heart. It was a model of elegance, clearness, simplicity and force in the art of narration.

In a letter to Miss Elizabeth Schuyler, the daughter of the distinguished general of that name, Hamilton describes the execution of André with graphic power; and thus speaks of that melancholy occurrence:

“Poor André suffers to day; everything that is amiable in virtue, in fortitude, in delicate sentiment and accomplished manners, pleads for him; but hard-hearted policy calls for a sacrifice. He must die. I send you my account of Arnold’s affair, and to justify myself to your sentiment, I must inform you that I urged a compliance with André’s request to be shot, and I do not think it would have had an ill effect; but some people are only sensible to motives of policy, and some-



Reading the Death Warrant to Major Andre.



times, from a narrow disposition, mistake it."—*Schmucker*.

#### HAMILTON AND THE CONSTITUTION.

In the end, the predictions of this great man and profound statesman were fully realized. Dr. Schmucker truthfully says, "The Constitution, which Hamilton chiefly elaborated, was finally adopted; and has since become the subject of the constant eulogy of myriads of eloquent tongues, and has received the admiration of the whole civilized world.

"The merit of Hamilton in connection with it can now scarcely be estimated; but when a thousand years of unequalled national prosperity and glory shall have rolled over this confederacy, which his great plastic hand moulded into so compact, so beautiful, and so consistent a mass; when five hundred millions of beings shall inhabit this continent, turning by their thrifty industry all her boundless plains and valleys into blooming and fruitful gardens; and when, from the Atlantic to the Pacific shore an empire of freemen shall here live and reign under the benign control of that Constitution, being ten times greater than any previous empire that ever existed on the earth; then, indeed, may the vast services and the venerable name of Alexander Hamilton be cherished with the profound reverence and the high appreciation which they abundantly deserve."

#### CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

The following observation states clearly and beautifully one of the chief attributes or characteristics of this celebrated work:

"Like one of those wondrous rocking stones reared by the Druids, which the finger of a child may vibrate to the centre, yet the might of an army could not move it from its place, our Constitution is so nicely poised and balanced, that it seems to sway with every breath of opinion, yet so firmly rooted in the heart and affections of the people, that the wildest storms of treason and fanaticism break over it in vain."—*R. C. Winthrop*.

#### HAMILTON'S DISTRUST OF FOREIGN INFLUENCE.

"Upon my first going into Congress I discovered symptoms of a party too well disposed to subject the interests of the United States to the management of France. Though I felt in common with those who had participated in the Revolution, a lively sentiment of good-will toward a power whose cooperation, however it was and ought to have been dictated by its own interest, had been extremely useful to us, and had been afforded in a liberal and handsome manner.

"Yet, tenacious of the real independence of our country, and dreading the preponderance of foreign influence as the natural disease of popular government, I was struck with disgust at the appearance, in the very cradle of our republic, of a party actuated by an undue complaisance to a foreign power, and I resolved at once to resist this bias in our affairs; a resolution which has been the chief cause of the persecution I have endured in the subsequent stages of my political life."

#### HAMILTON AND THE UNION.

"If the circumstances of our country are such," says

Hamilton, "as to demand a compound, instead of a simple—a confederate, instead of a sole government, the essential point which will remain to be adjusted, will be to discriminate the objects, as far as it can be done, which will appertain to the different provinces or departments of power: allowing to each the most ample authority for fulfilling those which may be committed to its charge.

"Shall the Union be constituted the guardian of the common safety? Are fleets, and armies, and revenues, necessary to this purpose? The government of the Union must be empowered to pass all laws, and to make all regulations which have relation to them.

"The same must be the case in respect to commerce, and to every other matter to which its jurisdiction is permitted to extend.

"Is the administration of justice between the citizens of the same State the proper department of the local governments? These must possess all the authorities which are connected with this object, and with every other that may be allotted to their particular cognizance and direction.

"Not to confer in each case a degree of power commensurate to the end, would be to violate the most obvious rules of prudence and propriety, and improvidently to trust the great interests of the nation to hands which are disabled from managing them with vigor and success."

#### HAMILTON ON ANCIENT AND MODERN REPUBLICS.

"It is impossible to read the history of the petty republics of Greece and Italy, without feeling sensations of

horror and disgust at the distractions with which they were continually agitated; and at the rapid succession of revolutions by which they were kept perpetually vibrat-

ing between the extremes of tyranny and anarchy.

"If they exhibit occasional calms, these only serve as short-lived contrasts to the furious storms that are to succeed.

"If now and then intervals of felicity open themselves to view, we behold them with a mixture of regret arising from the reflection, that the



Statue of Hamilton in front of the Hamilton Club,  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

pleasing scenes before us are soon to be overwhelmed by the tempestuous waves of sedition and party rage.

"If momentary rays of glory break forth from the gloom while they dazzle us with a transient and fleeting brill-

iancy, they at the same time admonish us to lament, that the vices of government should pervert the direction, and tarnish the lustre of those bright talents and exalted endowments for which the favored soils that produced them have been so justly celebrated.

"But it is not to be denied, that the portraits they have sketched of republican government, were too just copies of the originals from which they were taken. If it had been found impracticable to have devised models of a more perfect structure, the enlightened friends of liberty would have been obliged to abandon the cause of that species of government as indefensible.

"The science of politics, however, like most other sciences, has received great improvement. The efficacy of various principles is now well understood, which were either not known at all, or imperfectly known to the ancients.

"The regular distribution of power into distinct departments; the introduction of legislative balances and checks; the institution of courts composed of judges, holding their offices during good behavior; the representation of the people in the legislature, by deputies of their own election; these are either wholly new discoveries, or have made their principal progress toward perfection in modern times."

#### HAMILTON ON NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.

"Our own experience has corroborated the lessons taught by the examples of other nations; that emergencies of this sort will sometimes exist in all societies, how-



ever constituted; that seditions and insurrections are, unhappily, maladies as inseparable from the body politic, as tumors and eruptions from the natural body; that the idea of governing at all times by the simple force of law, (which we have been told is the only admissible principle of republican government) has no place but in the revery of those political doctors, whose sagacity disdains the admonitions of experimental instruction.

“Should such emergencies at any time happen under the national government, there could be no remedy but force. The means to be employed must be proportioned to the extent of the mischief. If it should be a slight commotion in a small part of a State, the militia of the residue would be adequate to its suppression: and the natural presumption is, that they would be ready to do their duty.

“An insurrection, whatever may be its immediate cause, eventually endangers all government.

“Regard for the public peace, if not for the rights of the Union, would engage the citizens, to whom the contagion had not communicated itself, to oppose the insurgents; and if the general government should be found in practice conducive to the prosperity and felicity of the people, it were irrational to believe that they would be disinclined to its support.”

#### HAMILTON ON THE RE-ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT.

“The administration of government, in its largest sense, comprehends all the operations of the body politic, whether legislative, executive, or judiciary; but in its most us

ual, and perhaps in its most precise signification, it is limited to executive details, and falls peculiarly within the province of the executive department.

“The actual conduct of foreign negotiations, the preparatory plans of finance, the application and disbursement of the public moneys in conformity to the general appropriations of the legislature, the arrangement of the army and navy, the direction of the operations of war; these, and other matters of the like nature, constitute what seems to be most properly understood by the administration of government.

“The persons, therefore, to whose immediate management these different matters are committed, ought to be considered as the assistants or deputies of the chief magistrate; and on this account, they ought to derive their offices from his appointment, at least from his nomination, and to be subject to his superintendence.

“This view of the thing will at once suggest to us the intimate connection between the duration of the executive magistrate in office, and the stability of the system of administration.

“To undo what has been done by a predecessor is very often considered by a successor as the best proof he can give of his own capacity and desert; and in addition to this propensity, where the alteration has been the result of public choice, the person substituted is warranted in supposing that the dismissal of his predecessor has proceeded from a dislike to his measures, and that the less he resembles him the more he will recommend himself to the favor of his constituents.

"These considerations, and the influence of personal confidences and attachments, would be likely to induce every new President to promote a change of men to fill the subordinate stations; and these causes together could not fail to occasion a disgraceful and ruinous mutability in the administration of the government."

#### HAMILTON ON TERM OF OFFICE.

(From a Letter to Timothy Pickering, Sept. 16, 1803.)

"I may truly say that I never proposed either a President or Senate for life; and that I neither recommended nor meditated the annihilation of the State governments.

"And I may add that, in a course of the discussions in the Convention, neither the propositions thrown out for debate, nor even those who voted in the earlier stages of deliberation, were considered as evidence of a definitive opinion in the proposer or voter.

"It appeared to be in some sort understood that, with a view to free investigation, experimental propositions might be made, which were to be received merely as suggestions for consideration. Accordingly, it is a fact that *my final opinion was against an executive during good behavior*, on account of the increased danger to the public tranquility incident to the election of a magistrate of his degree of permanency.

"In a plan of a Constitution which I drew up while the Convention was sitting, and which I communicated to Mr. Madison about the close of it, perhaps a day or two after, the office or President has no longer duration than for three years.

"This plan was predicated upon these bases: 1. That the political principles of the people of this country, would endure nothing but a republican government. 2. That in the actual situation of the country it was itself right and proper that the republican theory should have a full and fair trial. 3. That to such a trial it was essential that the government should be so constructed as to give it all the energy and the stability reconcilable with the principles of that theory. These were the genuine sentiments of my heart, and upon them I then acted.



Lord Cornwallis, against whose forces Hamilton led the gallant assault at Yorktown.

"I sincerely hope that it may not hereafter be discovered that, through want of sufficient attention to the last idea, the experiment of republican government, even in this country, has not been as complete, as satisfactory, and as decisive as could be wished."

#### HAMILTON'S DEFENSE OF WASHINGTON.

Hamilton was called upon to vindicate the character and integrity of his friend, the chief magistrate of the nation, from the foul charges which an infamous party-hatred preferred against him.

Both the military and political character of Washington were furiously assailed.

The republican or radical party asserted that he was

totally destitute of merit, either as a soldier or as a statesman. Even his personal qualities as a man were ridiculed and censured.

It was asserted that he had violated the Constitution in the recent treaty which had been made with England through the agency of Mr. Jay; and an impeachment even was threatened against *him*, whom all wise and good men now designate as the patriot who possessed the severest virtue known in modern times; who happily mingled in one, the characters of Aristides, Cincinnatus and Scipio.

It was also asserted that he had drawn from the Treasury for his private use, more than the amount of salary allowed him by law. To support this last infamous assumption, extracts from the accounts of the Treasury Office were laid before the House of Representatives.

Hamilton came forward boldly to the defense of his venerable friend. He denied publicly and officially in the journals that the appropriations made by the government had ever been exceeded.

The infamous charge was again repeated and insisted on; and then was seen that most despicable spectacle which a degraded humanity ever exhibits, when it eagerly seizes the opportunity to exult in the degradation of exalted personages, and of immortal names which they had long been compelled to respect and esteem.

These unfortunate circumstances induced Hamilton to prepare and publish a more explicit and full explanation.

He proved that Washington had himself never received in person any portion of his salary; but that the



money had all been received and disbursed by the person who superintended the expenses of the household.

He showed that it was the practice of the Treasury, when a certain sum had been appropriated for the current year, to pay it to that gentleman when called upon.

The expenses of some periods of the year sometimes exceeded the allowance, and at others they fell short of it. Sometimes money was paid in advance, and sometimes money stood to the credit of the President's household. In all these matters Washington himself had never personally interfered.

So complete was the vindication published by Hamilton of his illustrious friend, that even the foul tongue of faction was at last silenced, and the public confidence was restored again to the founder of the Republic.—*Schmucker.*

#### CONTRAST BETWEEN BURR AND HAMILTON.

Burr was crafty, selfish, unscrupulous and ambitious. He could assume all shapes and forms of political and moral character, in order to promote his personal interests.

His chief agents and favorite means in the accomplishment of his ends were secrecy and cunning. From his youth he delighted to throw a veil of obscurity and darkness over all his actions, even where obscurity and darkness were not necessary to the attainment of success.

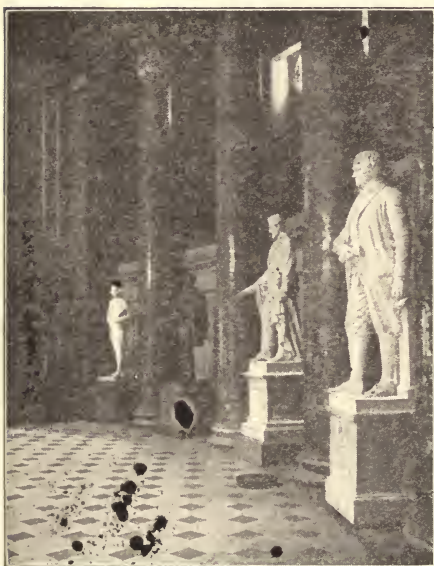
In weaving the intricate mazes of political intrigue, in the skillful use of unscrupulous means, in the con-

centration and combination of effective forces and heterogeneous elements, in perseverance amid difficulties, in fortitude in the midst of dangers, in coolness, calmness,

and determination, Aaron Burr had no superior among modern statesmen.

He was eloquent; but his eloquence was simple, unstrained, unadorned and displayed its superior power only by the effectiveness with which it commanded the reasons and swayed the wills of men.

He cared but little for his country's glory; his only idol was him-



Statue of Hamilton in Statuary Hall (Old House of Representatives), in Capitol at Washington.  
Hamilton's Statue is first at the right.  
Statue of Lincoln is next.

self. He entertained no faith in moral obligations; scarcely believed in the existence of a supreme governor of the Universe; and was, in every sense, a great, gifted, corrupt and dangerous man.

Alexander Hamilton was directly the opposite of his rival, both in his mental and moral qualities.

He was honest and consistent in his political belief. He was very open, candid and impulsive in his nature. He too was eloquent; but his eloquence was stately, gorgeous, ornate and polished. He more nearly resembled Edmund Burke both as a writer, a speaker, and a statesman, than any other distinguished man of modern times.

There was no secrecy, craft, or duplicity in his composition. He loved his country with a lofty, generous and disinterested patriotism; and to her glory his great talents and unwearied services were constantly devoted. He was no civilized heathen; but believed in the Christian faith, acknowledged the moral obligation of man to his Creator, and was guided in general by a regard to the claims of moral duty.

The best estimate of his character may be drawn from the single fact that, until Washington's death, he remained his bosom friend, his chief favorite, his intimate and confidential associate.—*Schmucker*.

#### HAMILTON'S PROTEST AGAINST DUELLING.

Hamilton placed on record his protest against the prevalence and power of the barbarous code to which he himself was about to fall a victim. Among the papers which he left behind him was the following:

"On my expected interview with Colonel Burr, I think it proper to make some remarks explanatory of my conduct, motives, and views. I was certainly desirous of avoiding this interview for the most cogent reasons.

"1. My religious and moral principles are strongly op-

posed to the practice of duelling, and it would ever give me pain to be obliged to shed the blood of a fellow-creature in a private combat forbidden by the laws.

"2. My wife and children are extremely dear to me, and my life is of the utmost importance to them in various views.

"3. I feel a sense of obligation toward my creditors; who, in case of accident to me, by the forced sale of my property, may be in some degree sufferers. I did not think myself at liberty, as a man of probity, likely to expose them to this hazard.

"4. I am conscious of no *ill-will* to Colonel Burr distinct from political opposition, which, as I trust, has proceeded from pure and upright motives.

"Lastly, I shall hazard much, and can possibly gain nothing by the issue of the interview.

"But it was, as I conceive, impossible for me to avoid it. There were *intrinsic* difficulties in the thing, and *artificial* embarrassments from the manner of proceeding on the part of Colonel Burr.

"*Intrinsic*, because it is not to be denied that my animadversions on the political principles, character, and views of Colonel Burr have been extremely severe; and, on different occasions, I, in common with many others, have made very unfavorable criticisms on particular instances of the private conduct of this gentleman.

"It is not my design, by what I have said to affix any odium on the character of Colonel Burr in this case. He *doubtless has heard of animadversions of mine which bore very hard upon him*; and it is probable that, as us-

ual, they were accompanied with some falsehoods. He may have supposed himself under a necessity of acting as he has done. I hope the grounds of his proceeding have been such as ought to satisfy his own conscience.

"I trust, at the same time, that the world will do me the justice to believe that I have not censured him on light grounds nor from unworthy inducements.

"I certainly have had strong reasons for what I have said, though it is possible that in some particulars I have been influenced by misconstruction or misinformation. It is also my ardent wish that I may have been more mistaken than I think I have been; and that he, by his future conduct, may show himself worthy of all confidence and esteem, and prove an ornament and blessing to the country.

"As well, because it is possible that I may have injured Colonel Burr, however convinced myself that my opinions and declarations have been well founded, as from my general principles and temper in relation to similar affairs, I have resolved, if our interview is conducted in the usual manner, and it pleases God to give me the opportunity, to reserve and throw away my first fire; and I have thoughts even of reserving my second, and thus giving a double opportunity to Colonel Burr to pause and repent.

"It is not my intention, however, to enter into any explanation on the ground. Apology, from principle I hope rather than pride, is out of the question.

"To those who, with me, abhorring the practice of du-



elling, may think that I ought on no account to have added to the number of bad examples, I answer, that my *relative* situation, as well in public as in private, enforcing all the considerations which constitute what men of the world denominate honor imposed on me, as I thought, a peculiar necessity not to decline the call.

“The ability to be in the future useful, whether in resisting mischief or effecting good in those crises of our public affairs which seem likely to happen, would probably be inseparable from a conformity with public prejudice in this particular.”

Mr. Hamilton also wrote a letter for Mrs. Hamilton, to be delivered in case he fell. In it he assured her that he had taken all possible means to avoid the duel, except in acting in such a manner as would forfeit her esteem; that he had determined not to fire at Burr, and that he expected to fall. He asked her forgiveness for inflicting so much pain, and commended her and her children to God.

#### FUNERAL OF HAMILTON.

When the hour appointed for the funeral arrived, a more imposing scene had never been witnessed on this continent, than that which was then presented.

The Society of the Cincinnati very properly took charge of the last obsequies of their departed brother. Twenty-three different orders, societies and corporations joined the funeral procession, besides the military array, composed of both infantry and artillery.

The great standard of the order of the Cincinnati,

which Washington himself had consecrated, shrouded in crape, was carried in the procession in the rear of the corpse. Solemn martial music, hallowed in the memories of not a few then present by many revolutionary scenes, reverberated through the silent air, and drew tears from myriads of eyes. At twelve o'clock the procession moved.

The pall was supported by eight of the most distinguished citizens of the State of New York, the personal friends of the deceased. On the top of the coffin were placed the general's hat and sword. His old charger, which had carried him over more than one field of blood, was dressed in mourning and led behind the bier.

- When the immense procession arrived at Trinity Church

on Broadway, Gouverneur Morris, surrounded by the four sons of General Hamilton, delivered an oration characterized by solemn and appropriate eloquence, from a stage erected in front of the church.

The multitude were bathed in tears, while the impressive voice of the orator gave utterance to thoughts which found a ready echo in every heart. Speaking of the illustrious dead, he said:

"You have long witnessed his professional conduct and felt his unrivaled eloquence. You know how well he performed the duties of a citizen. You know that he



John Rutledge,  
American Statesman and Jurist.  
Born 1739. Died 1800.

never courted your favors by adulation or the sacrifice of his own judgment. You have seen him contending against you, saving your dearest interests as it were in spite of yourselves. And now you feel and enjoy the benefits resulting from the firm energy of his conduct.

"Bear this testimony to the memory of my departed friend. *I charge you to protect his fame.* It is all he has left — all that these poor orphan children will inherit from their father.

"But, my countrymen, that fame may be a rich treasure to you also. Let it be the test by which to examine those who solicit your favor. Disregarding professions view their conduct, and on a doubtful occasion ask; *Would Hamilton have done this thing?*

"You all know how he perished. On this last scene I cannot, I must not dwell. I might excite emotions too strong for your better judgment. Suffer not your indignation to lead to any act which might again offend the insulted majesty of the law. On his part, as from his lips, though with my voice,—for *his* voice you will hear no more,—let me entreat you to respect yourselves."

#### RESULT OF THE DUEL.

The result of the duel was to deprive Burr of all power and influence. He killed Hamilton, but he fell himself by the same shot that carried death to his opponent; and so complete was his fall that he never could rise again, though he continued to cumber the earth for more than thirty-two years. Hamilton's quarrel with Burr, as his son and biographer truly observes, "was the quarrel

of his country. It was the last act in the great drama of his life. It was the deliberate sacrifice of that life for his country's welfare,—a sacrifice which, by overwhelming his antagonist with the execrations of the American people, prevented a civil war, and saved from 'dismemberment' this great republic."—*C. C. Hazewell.*



Grave of Aaron Burr, Princeton, N. J

#### AARON BURR.

Burr was utterly indifferent to all political principle. He never really belonged to any party, and was as ready to act with Federalists as with Democrats; and it was only through the force of circumstances that he did act generally with the latter. A party man never would

have done as Burr saw fit to do when the Presidential election of 1801 devolved on the House of Representatives. The party to which he professed to belong intended, as everybody knew, that Jefferson should be President; and yet Burr allowed himself to be used against Jefferson. That "all is fair in politics" was his creed. He may have been "a man of honor," but what Lord Macaulay says of Avaux is strictly applicable to him, namely,—“that of the difference between right and wrong he had no more notion than a brute.”—*C. C. Hazewell.*

## LAST DAYS OF AARON BURR.

Besides the mighty load of universal obloquy and hate which overwhelmed Burr as the murderer of an innocent and illustrious victim, poverty and suffering attended him during his remaining years.

Thus, when wandering in France, an exile and an outcast, suspected and frowned on by Napoleon, he records as follows in his diary of November 23, 1810: "Nothing from America, and really I shall starve. Borrowed three francs to-day. Four or five little debts keep me in constant alarm; altogether, about two Louis.

"December 1, 1810. — came in upon me this morning, just as I was out of bed, for twenty-seven livres. Paid him, which took literally my last sous.

"When at Denon's, thought I might as well go to St. Pelasgie; set off, but recollected I owed the woman who sits in the passage two sous for a cigar, so turned about to pursue my way by the Pont des Arts, which was within fifty paces; remembered I had not wherewith to pay



the toll, being one sous; had to go all the way round by the Pont Royal, more than half a mile."

Burr was subsequently afflicted with the mysterious and premature death of his daughter, Theodosia Alston, one of the most beautiful and accomplished women of her time. She and her son were supposed to have been lost at sea.

At length this aged curse of his country and disgrace of his race died at New York, on the 14th of September, 1836, in the eighty-first year of his age.

He survived his duel with General Hamilton more than thirty years; and during that long and cheerless interval he passed through scenes of trial, anxiety and suffering which would have completely crushed any intellect not as powerful, and any heart not as adamant, as his own.

#### PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF HAMILTON.

The personal appearance of Mr. Hamilton was pleasing and attractive. When at the age of thirty-eight, he resumed the practice of the law in New York, in 1795, he was thus described:

"He was under the middle size, thin in person, and very erect, courtly and dignified in his bearing. His hair was combed back from his forehead, powdered and collected in a cue behind. His complexion was very delicate and fair, his cheeks rosy, and the whole expression pleasing and cheerful. His forehead was lofty, capacious and prominent.

"His appearance accorded well with the expectations

which his prodigious fame excited. His voice was musical, his manner frank and impulsive. His ordinary dress was a blue coat with gilt buttons, a white silk waistcoat, black silk small-clothes, and white silk stockings.

“His figure, though slight, was well proportioned and graceful. His appearance and carriage betokened the possessor of a masterly intellect, and one fully conscious of his powers.”—*Schmucker*.

#### QUALITIES OF HAMILTON.

When Mr. Webster so happily compared the instantaneousness and perfection of his financial system to “the fabled birth of Minerva,” he did but allude to what is to be remarked of all Hamilton’s works. All that he did was perfect, and no one seems to have been aware of his power until he had established the fact of its existence.

Such a combination of precocity and versatility stands quite unparalleled.

Octavius, William the Third, Henry St. John, Charles James Fox, and William Pitt the younger, all showed various powers at early periods of their lives; but not one of them was the equal of Hamilton in respect to early maturity of intellect, or in ability to command success in every department to which he turned his attention.

The historical character of whom he most reminds us is the elder Africanus.

In the early development of his faculties, in his self-reliant spirit, in his patriotism, in his kingliness of mind, in his personal purity, in his generosity of thought and

of action, and in the fear and envy that he excited in inferior minds, he was a repetition of the most majestic of all the Romans.

But, unlike the Roman soldier-statesman, he did not desert the land he had saved, but which had proved ungrateful; and the grave only was to be his Litternum.

He died at not far from the same age as that to which Africanus reached. In comparing him with certain other men who achieved fame early, it should be remembered that they all were regularly prepared for public life, and were born to it as to an inheritance; whereas he, though of patrician blood, was possessed of no advantages of fortune, and had to fight the battle of life while fighting the battles of the nation.—*C. G. Hazewell.*

#### EXCELLENCIES OF HAMILTON.

Alexander Hamilton was the indefatigable soldier of the press, the pen and the army; in each field he carried a sword which, like the one borne by the angel at the gate of Paradise, flashed its guardian care on every hand.

In martial affairs he was an adept, in literary excellence he was unexcelled, and in political discernment he was universally acknowledged to be superior among the great.

We read his writings with ever-increasing zest, fascinated by the seductive charms of his style, and impelled by the opening splendors of his far-reaching and comprehensive thoughts. They accumulate with a beautiful symmetry, and emanate legitimately from his theme. They expand and grow, as an acorn rises into an oak, of

which all the branches shoot out of the same trunk, nourished in every part by the same sap, and form a perfect unit, amid all the diversified tints of the foliage and the infinite complexity of the boughs.

"That writer would deserve the fame of a public benefactor," said Fisher Ames, "who could exhibit the character of Hamilton with the truth and force that all who intimately knew him conceived it; his example would then take the same ascendant as his talents.

"The portrait alone, however exquisitely finished, could not inspire genius where it is not; but if the world should again have possession of so rare a gift, it might awaken it where it sleeps, as by a spark from heaven's own altar; for surely if there is anything like divinity in man it is in his admiration for virtue.

"The country deeply laments when it turns its eyes back and sees what Hamilton was; but my soul stiffens with despair," continues Ames, "when I think what Hamilton *would have been*. It is not as Apollo, enchanting the shepherds with his lyre, that we deplore him; it is as Hercules, treacherously slain in the midst of his unfinished labors, leaving the world overrun with monsters."—*E. L. Magoon*.

#### MARSHALL'S TRIBUTE TO HAMILTON.

(Life of Washington.)

"Seldom has any minister excited the opposite passions of love and hate in a higher degree than Colonel Hamilton. His talents were too prominent not to receive the tribute of profound respect from all; and his in-

tegrity and honor as a man, not less than his official rectitude, though slandered at a distance, were admitted to be superior to reproach by those enemies who knew him.

"But with respect to his political principles and designs, the most contradictory opinions were entertained. While one party sincerely believed his object to be the preservation of the Constitution of the United States in its purity; the other, with perhaps equal sincerity, imputed to him the insidious intention of subverting it. While his friends were persuaded that, as a statesman, he viewed foreign nations with an equal eye, his enemies could perceive in his conduct only hostility to France and attachment to her rival.

"In the good opinion of the President, to whom he was best known, he had always held a high place; and he carried with him out of office the same cordial esteem for his character, and respect for his talents, which had induced his appointment."

#### HAMILTON'S SELF-CONFIDENCE.

It was not until the 2d of September that the Treasury Department was created; and on the 11th Alexander Hamilton was made Secretary of the Treasury.

Writing to Robert Morris, Washington had asked, "What are we to do with this heavy debt?"

To which Morris answered, "There is but one man in the United States, who can tell you: that is Alexander Hamilton."

"I am glad you have given me this opportunity to declare to you the extent of the obligations I am under to him."



Hamilton had thought of the station for himself, but his warmest personal friends objected to his taking it.

Robert Troup says—"I remonstrated with him: he admitted that his acceptance of it would be likely to injure his family, but said there was a strong impression on his mind that in the financial department he would essentially promote the welfare of the country; and this impression, united with Washington's request, forbade his refusal of the appointment."

Having said, in conversing with Gouverneur Morris, that he was confident he could restore public credit, Morris remonstrated with him for thinking of so perilous a position, on which calumny and persecution were the inevitable attendants.

"Of that," Hamilton answered, "I am aware; but I am convinced it is the situation in which I can do most good."

He had the same just self-confidence that Cromwell felt, when he said to John Hampden that he would effect something for the Parliamentary cause, and that William Pitt felt in 1757, when he said to the Duke of Devonshire.

"My Lord, I am sure that I can save this country, and that nobody else can."

As with Cromwell and with Pitt, Hamilton's self-confidence was to be conclusively justified by the event.—  
*C. C. Hazewell.*

#### HAMILTON AT VALLEY FORGE.

Near the headquarters of Washington, at Valley Forge,

were the ruins of an old flour-mill, whose clack was heard before the Revolution, nor ceased until within a few years. Immediately after the battle of Brandywine, and previous to the encampment here, the Americans had made a considerable deposit of stores at this mill.

Howe sent a detachment of British troops to seize them; but Washington, anticipating this attempt, had sent Lieutenant-Colonel (afterward General) Hamilton, and Captain (afterward General) Henry Lee, with a small troop of horse for the purpose of destroying these stores.

Hamilton, with proper precaution, stationed two videttes upon the southern hill overlooking the valley, and also secured a flat bottomed boat on which to cross the Schuylkill, in the event of the sudden appearance of the enemy. The troops had crossed the mill-race, and were about to commence the work of demolition, when the alarm-guns of the videttes were heard, and they were seen sweeping down the hill, closely pursued by some British dragoons.

Four of the American horsemen, with Hamilton, took to the boat; while Lee, with the other four, and the videttes, crossed the bridge and escaped, amid a shower of bullets from the enemy. Hamilton and his party were also fired upon, but were unharmed.

Lee was fearful that his comrades, with Hamilton, were killed or made prisoners, for he heard volley after volley fired from the carbines of the enemy, while there was only an occasional response from his friends. Lee dispatched a dragoon to the Commander-in-chief, describing what had occurred, and expressing his anxious fears

for the safety of Hamilton and his men. While Washington was reading Lee's letter, Hamilton rode up, and with quite as much distress depicted in his face as the former had exhibited in his note, expressed his fears that his friend Lee was cut off. Washington quieted his apprehensions by handing him Lee's letter.

#### BATTLE OF TRENTON.

The summer and fall of 1776 was the most gloomy period of the American Revolution.

General Washington had been obliged to retreat from Long Island to New York, thence over the Hudson to New Jersey, and through New Jersey to Pennsylvania, vigorously pursued by an enemy flushed with a series of successes.

The retreat through New Jersey was attended with circumstances of a painful and trying nature.

Washington's army, which had consisted of 30,000 men, was now diminished to scarcely 3000, and these were without supplies, without pay, and many of them without shoes or comfortable clothing.

Their footsteps were stained with blood as they fled before the enemy. The affairs of the Americans seemed in such a desperate condition, that those who had been most confident of success, began despairingly to give up all for lost.

Many Americans joined the British, and took protection from them. In this season of general despondency, the American Congress recommended to each of the states to observe "a day of solemn fasting and humiliation before God."

General Washington saw the necessity of making a desperate effort for the salvation of his country. On the night of the 25th of December, 1776, the American army recrossed the Delaware, which was filled with pieces of floating ice, and marched to attack a division of Hessians, who had advanced to Trenton. The sun had just risen, as the tents of the enemy appeared in sight. No time was to be lost—Washington, rising on his stirrups, waved his sword toward the hostile army, and exclaimed:

“There, my brave friends, are the enemies of your country! and now all I have to ask of you is, to remember what you are about to fight for! March!”

The troops, animated by their commander, pressed on to the charge; the Hessians were taken by surprise, and the contest was soon decided: about 1000 were taken prisoners, and 40 killed, among whom was their commander, (a German officer,) Colonel Rahl.

BATTLE OF PRINCETON, IN WHICH HAMILTON TOOK  
AN ACTIVE PART.

Jan. 3, 1777.

General Washington, having secured the Hessian prisoners on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware, recrossed the river two days after the action, and took possession of Trenton.

Generals Mifflin and Cadwallader, who lay at Bordentown and Crosswix with 3600 militia, were ordered to march up in the night of the 1st of January, to join the Commander-in-chief, whose whole effective force, including this accession, did not exceed 5000 men.

The detachments of the British army, which had been

distributed over New Jersey, now assembled at Princeton, and were joined by the army from Brunswick under Lord Cornwallis.

From this position the enemy advanced toward Trenton in great force, on the morning of the 2d of January; and, after some slight skirmishing with troops, detached to harass and delay their march, the van of their army reached Trenton about four in the afternoon.

On their approach, General Washington retired across the Assumpiuck, a rivulet that runs through the town, and, by some field-pieces posted on its opposite banks, compelled them, after attempting to cross in several places, to fall back out of the reach of his guns.

The two armies, kindling their fires, retained their position on opposite sides of the rivulet, and kept up a cannonade until night.

The situation of the American general was at this moment extremely critical. Nothing but a stream, in many places fordable, separated his army from an enemy, in every respect its superior.

If he remained in his present position, he was certain of being attacked the next morning, at the hazard of the entire destruction of his little army.

If he should retreat over the Delaware, the ice in that river not being firm enough to admit a passage upon it, there was danger of great loss, perhaps of a total defeat; the Jerseys would be in full possession of the enemy; the public mind would be depressed; recruiting would be discouraged; and Philadelphia would be within the reach of General Howe.



In this extremity, he boldly determined to abandon the Delaware, and by a circuitous march along the left flank of the enemy, fall into their rear at Princeton.

As soon as it was dark, the baggage was silently removed to Burlington; and about one o'clock the army, leaving its fires lighted, and the sentinels on the margin of the creek, decamped with perfect secrecy.

Its movement was providentially favored by the weather, which had previously been so warm and moist, that the ground was soft, and the roads were scarcely passable; but, the wind suddenly changing to the northwest, the ground was in a short time frozen as hard as a pavement. About sunrise, two British regiments, that were on their march under Lieutenant-Colonel Mawhood to join the rear of the British army at Maidenhead, fell in with the van of the Americans, conducted by General Mercer, and a very sharp action ensued.

The advanced party of the Americans, composed chiefly of militia, soon gave way, and the few regulars attached to them could not maintain their ground. General Mercer, while gallantly exerting himself to rally his broken troops, received a mortal wound. The British rushed forward with fixed bayonets, and drove back the Americans.

General Washington, who followed close in the rear, now led on the main body of the army, and attacked the enemy with great spirit.

While he exposed himself to their hottest fire, he was so well supported by the same troops which had aided him a few days before in the victory at Trenton, that the

British were compelled to give way. The Seventeenth Regiment, which was in front, forced its way through a part of the American troops, and reached Maidenhead. The Fifty-fifth Regiment, which was in the rear, retreated by the way of Hillsborough to Brunswick.

General Washington pressed forward to Princeton.

A party of the British that had taken refuge in the college, after receiving a few discharges from the American field-pieces, came out and surrendered themselves prisoners of war; but the principal part of the regiment that was left there saved itself by a precipitate retreat to Brunswick. Both in the Battle of Trenton and that of Princeton, Hamilton rendered efficient aid.

In the retreat of the Americans, Hamilton effected a diversion in favor of the patriot army by planting his artillery on a high ground which commanded the ford of the river, and playing so effectively on the British lines as to delay their progress, and enable Washington to make good his retreat.

When the American army went into winter quarters at Morristown, on March 1st, 1777, Hamilton was justly rewarded for his services by the appointment of aid-de-camp and private secretary to Washington, with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

#### SIEGE OF YORKTOWN.

The autumn of 1780 found the British in possession of most of the southern states. Charleston had fallen, South Carolina had been overrun, Virginia was threatened; and the victorious Gates, advancing to the succor

of the patriots, had been totally destroyed at Camden. But the savage policy adopted by Cornwallis to secure his conquest was ultimately the cause of his ruin.

He issued a proclamation, sequestering the estates of all those, not included in the capitulation of Charleston, who were in the service or acting under the authority of Congress, and of all others who, by an open avowal of liberal principles, or other notorious acts, should show a leaning to the colonial authorities. At this juncture Marion appeared; the militia flocked to his standard; and the success of the partisan war carried on by him and Sumpter raised the drooping spirits of the whigs.

The appointment of Greene to the command of the southern army, and the brilliant affair at the Cowpens, still further exalted their hopes; so that even the check at Guilford Court House failed to dishearten them. Indeed, the result of that battle was almost as unfavorable to the British as to the Americans.

In a few days Greene was ready to renew the contest; but Cornwallis eluded his grasp, and reached Wilmington, in his way to Virginia, on the 7th of April, 1781. The American leader, finding it impossible to bring his enemy to battle, took the bold resolution of marching into South Carolina, and thus forcing Cornwallis to follow him or abandon his conquests.

The British general, on receiving intelligence of this movement, hesitated, but finally determined to pursue his first design, and over-run Virginia.

By this daring step he would place his army in a country not yet wasted by war, and where, consequently, sup-

plies would be plentiful; while, if he should succeed in reducing the colony, the subjugation of the other southern states would inevitably follow, no matter how fortunate Greene, in the mean time, might be.

For a time success followed every footstep of the foe. Cornwallis, advancing rapidly northward, had united himself to the British Generals, Phillips and Arnold, as early as the latter end of May; while La Fayette, who had been dispatched to succor Greene, but had been arrested by the enemy on the James River, was preserved from capture only by his energy and address.

At length a junction was effected between him and Wayne, and subsequently a detachment led by Baron Steuben still further increased his force. Happily, at this crisis, Sir Henry Clinton, alarmed by Washington's preparations for the siege of New York, recalled a portion of the force of Cornwallis, and that general, now somewhat weakened, retired to Yorktown.

The brave continentals traversed now, with far different feelings, the ground over which they had fled a few years before, ill-provisioned, poorly clothed, and marking their footsteps with blood. There was before them the prospect of reducing a formidable army, with but little expense of blood and treasure, and thus revenging their own wrongs and redeeming their country.

They had already eluded Sir Henry Clinton, and a few days would probably enable them to surround Cornwallis. They marched on with high hopes, cheering their way with songs, and before the end of September arrived at Williamsburgh, in the immediate vicinity of the foe.

Meantime, the French fleet, in pursuance of the concerted plan, had reached the Chesapeake, while Cornwallis, too late aware of the net in which he was involved, had been assiduously occupied in fortifying his position.

Having formed a junction with La Fayette, the allied army, commanded by Washington in person, moved down from Williamsburgh to Yorktown; and on the 30th of September occupied the outer lines of Cornwallis, which that general had abandoned without a struggle. Two thousand men were detailed to the Gloucester side to blockade that post. The investment was now complete.

A noble emulation fired the soldiers of the respective nations as they advanced across the plain. La Fayette led the continentals: the Baron de Viominel commanded his countrymen.

The redoubt entrusted to the Americans, led by Hamilton, was carried at the bayonet's point, the assailants rushing on with such impetuosity that the sappers had not time to remove the abattis and palisades. The French were equally courageous and successful, though, as their redoubt was defended by a larger force, the conquest was not so speedy, and their loss was greater.

It was a proud day for the war-worn troops of America, when the richly appointed soldiery of Britain marched out with dejected faces from their works, and in profound silence stacked their arms on the plain, in presence of the conquerers.

But no unmanly exultation was seen among the allies.



With decent pity they gazed on the spectacle, reserving their congratulations for their private quarters.

But there, the rejoicings were loud and fervent, and the gay Frenchmen from the Loire joined in triumphal songs with the hardy sons of New England, or the more enthusiastic Virginian.

#### HAMILTON'S GALLANTRY AT YORKTOWN.

The gallantry of the storm was not less distinguished than the humanity of the victors. In the midst of the works, as soon as Hamilton saw the enemy driven back, he ordered his men to halt, and excepting in the charge at the onset, not a man was injured.

An incident occurred as soon as they entered the redoubt, to which Hamilton refers in his report. "Incapable of imitating examples of barbarity, and forgetting recent provocations, the soldiery spared every man who ceased to fight."

Colonel Scammell, of the light infantry, while reconnoitering, a few days before, was surprised by a party of horse, and after he was taken was wantonly wounded, of which wound he died.

When Colonel Campbell, who commanded the redoubt, advanced to surrender, a captain, who had served under Scammell, seized a bayonet, and drew back with the intent of plunging it into his breast, when Hamilton turned it aside, and Campbell, exclaiming,

"I place myself under your protection," was made prisoner by Laurens.

While receiving the warmest expressions of admiration

from the whole army, Hamilton, thus modestly, in a letter written to soothe the anxiety of his wife, adverts to what had passed. "Two nights ago, my Eliza, my duty and my honour obliged me to take a step in which your happiness was too much risked. I commanded an attack upon one of the enemy's redoubts; we carried it in an instant, and with little loss. You will see the particulars in the Philadelphia papers. There will be, certainly, nothing more of this kind; all the rest will be by approach; and if there should be another occasion, it will not fall to my turn to execute it."

Washington, having concerted measures for the next campaign in a personal interview with congress, revisited Mount Vernon, loaded with laurels, and crowned with glory, while Hamilton returned on furlough to his home.

Gratifying as had been the result of this campaign, which sealed the national independence, and proud as were his reflections in reviewing the long series of services he had rendered his country, and in being connected so conspicuously with an event which may be regarded as the closing scene of the revolution, yet those reflections were not unmingled with others of a deeply painful character. Though, with every uncorrupted mind, he deplored the miseries of war, yet long service had confirmed in his bosom a fondness for military life. As an eloquent friend has well remarked, "his early education was in the camp; there his earliest and most cordial friendships were formed; there he became enamoured of glory, and was admitted to her embrace." This life was now soon to end, and those friendships, so warmly cher-

ished, could be cultivated only at intervals. Knowing also that the army was not a favourite of congress, he could not but survey for the last time, with pain, the war-worn faces of those faithful men, who, while winning the liberties of their country, had won for her such imperishable renown, requited, as he felt they were to be, by the grossest ingratitude.

Of his immediate companions in the family of Washington, with two he had already parted. Early in the year, Meade, who had recently married, retired from the service, and except by his gallantry in rushing to the aid of Steuben, and repulsing the advances of Arnold from his native state, was no longer known as a public man.

The "Old Secretary," Harrison, as he was familiarly called, left the army the previous spring, having been appointed by the state of Maryland, Chief Justice of its Supreme Court; which situation he filled until the adoption of the Federal Constitution, when such was Washington's estimate of the claims of this meritorious individual upon his country, that he nominated him a Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States, immediately after its organization, which he declined.—*J.C. Hamilton.*

#### THE BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL.

Hamilton attended a grammar school at Elizabethtown, N. J. The most famous boys' school of that period, however, was the Boston Latin School. It was the first public school in Boston. It was the beginning of the public school system of that city, whose origin is

found in the following order, adopted by the freemen of the town, on the 13th of April, 1635:

“Likewise it was then generally agreed upon, that our brother, Philemon Purmont, shall be entreated to become schoolmaster for the teaching and nurturing of children with us.”

This Public Latin School has been continued to the present day. Its chief function during the whole period of its existence has been the fitting of boys for Harvard College, now Harvard University. Until 1682 this was



Old Boston Latin School, on  
School St., Boston.

the only school in Boston. In that year it was voted in town meeting, “that a committee with the selectmen consider and provide one or more free schools for the teaching of children to write and cipher within this town.” Afterwards schools were established for reading and spelling. It is interesting to note that this public school system began with discrimination against the girls. Pupils were not admitted to these schools until they were seven years of age; and girls were not admit-

ted until 1789, and for forty years afterwards were permitted to attend for only half the year, from April to October.

Some of the most eminent men of Boston were edu-



Boys' Latin School, Boston, of To-Day.

cated in the Latin School—Samuel Adams, James Otis, and John Hancock being among the number.

#### THE FIRST PRAYER IN CONGRESS.

The Hon. Rufus King narrates these particulars regarding the first prayer in congress:

“The convention of 1788, of which Dr. Franklin and myself were members, had been engaged several weeks in framing the present Constitution, and had done nothing. Dr. Franklin came in one morning, and, rising in his place, called the attention of the house.



“‘We have been here, Mr. Speaker,’ said he (George Washington was in the chair,) ‘a long time, trying to act on this important subject, and have done nothing; and in place of a speedy and successful close of our business, we see nothing but dark clouds of difficulty and embarrassment before us. It is high time for us, Mr. Speaker, to call in the direction of a wisdom above our own. (The countenance of Washington caught a brightness at these words, as he leaned forward in deepest gaze on Dr. Franklin.) Yes, sir, it is high time for us to call in the direction of a wisdom above our own.



Rufus King.  
Born 1755. Died 1827.

“‘Our fathers before us, the wise and good men of ancient times, acted in this way. Aware of the difficulties and perils that attend all human enterprise, they never engaged in anything of importance without having implored the guidance and blessing of heaven.

“‘The scriptures are full of encouragements to such practice. They everywhere assert a *particular providence* over all His works. They assure us that the very hairs of our head are all numbered; and that not even a sparrow but is continually under the eye of His parental care.

“‘This, Mr. Speaker, is the language of the gospel, which I *most implicitly believe*; and which promises the

guidance of divine wisdom to *all who ask it*. We have not asked it; and that may be the reason why we have been so long in the dark.

“I therefore move, Mr. Speaker, that it be made a rule to open the business of this house, every morning, *with prayer*.”

#### HAMILTON AND THE RATIFICATION OF THE CONSTITUTION BY NEW YORK.

When the convention met at Poughkeepsie, eight states had ratified the Constitution. It required the consent of only one more to put it in operation.

On the 24th of June the swift couriers, arranged by Hamilton, brought word from Concord to Poughkeepsie that New Hampshire had ratified the Constitution.

Hamilton had taken this pains in the hope that the news of the approval of the ninth state would have a favorable effect on the New York convention.

But the opponents of a national government remained unmoved. Even the news of the ratification by Virginia produced no change.

The final struggle came on propositions for a conditional ratification. The first provided for a ratification on condition that certain amendments were previously adopted.

After debate this was seen to be impracticable, and was withdrawn.

Then came the proposition for ratification on condition that if certain amendments were not made within a given time, the state should have a right to withdraw from

the Union. There was great danger that this proposition, which to many looked so plausible, but which was really as impracticable as the first, might be adopted.

It was at this stage of the proceedings that a friend from New York City called on Hamilton.

"I found him," he says, "alone, and took the liberty to say to him that they would inquire of me in New York, what was the prospect in relation to the adoption of the Constitution; and asked him what I should say to them.

"His manner immediately changed, and he answered:

"'God only knows, several votes have been taken, by which it appears that there are two to one against us.'

"Supposing he had concluded his answer, I was about to retire, when he added, in a most emphatic manner:

"'Tell them that the convention shall never rise until the Constitution is adopted.' "

With this resolute spirit, Hamilton went back to the contest and made another speech, so powerful, so impassioned, so convincing, that at its close Melancthon Smith, the leader of the opposition, had the manliness to acknowledge that the arguments of Hamilton were unanswerable, and that he should vote for ratification.

In vain Gov. Clinton attempted to rally his forces.

Smith carried so many of his followers with him that when the final vote was taken, on the 25th of July, by a majority of three votes, the Constitution was adopted.—*Lewis Henry Boutell.*

#### TRIBUTE OF GUIZOT TO HAMILTON.

"Hamilton must be classed among the men who have

best known the vital principles and fundamental conditions of a government.

"There is not in the Constitution of the United States an element of order, of force, of duration, which he has not powerfully contributed to introduce into it, and to cause to predominate."

## PROF. BRYCE ON HAMILTON.

"One cannot note the disappearance of this brilliant figure, to Europeans the most interesting in the earlier history of the republic, without the remark that his countrymen seem to have never, either in his lifetime or afterward, duly recognized his splendid gifts.

"Washington is, indeed, a far more perfect character.

"Washington stands alone and unapproachable, like a snow-peak rising above its fellows into the clear air of morning, with a dignity, constancy and purity which have made him the ideal type of civic virtue to succeeding generations.

"No greater benefit could have befallen the republic than to have such a type set from the first before the eye and mind of the people.

"But Hamilton, of a virtue not so flawless, touches us more nearly, not only by the romance of his early life and his tragic death, but by a certain ardor and impulsiveness, and even tenderness of soul, joined to a courage equal to that of Washington himself. Equally apt for war and for civil government, with a profundity and amplitude of view rare in practical soldiers or statesmen, he stood in the front rank of a generation never surpassed

in history, a generation which includes Burke and Fox, and Pitt and Grattan, Stein and Hardenburg and William von Humboldt, Wellington and Napoleon."—"The American Commonwealth."

#### SCHMUCKER'S TRIBUTE TO HAMILTON.

The premature death of Hamilton was a national calamity. It is not difficult to predict to what exalted posts of honor he would have been promoted, had he lived. Possessing, as he did, the full confidence of the nation, having filled important offices of trust with the purest integrity and the highest praise; being devoted to the interests of his country; his faculties being matured by experience, and his knowledge of the wants of the nation enlarged by study and observation; it is not improbable that a very few years would have seen him occupying the presidential chair. And if, as was probable, that event occurred during the existence of the war of 1812, Mr. Hamilton would, by virtue of his office, have been commander-in-chief of the American armies; and it is but a reasonable inference to suppose that his military genius would have shone forth in that great crisis more resplendent than ever. In a word, the completed and fully consummated career of Alexander Hamilton would without much doubt have been the brightest, loftiest, and noblest presented in the whole range of American history. All this fair picture was spoiled by the malignity of his bitterest foe, Aaron Burr. A nation's tears were shed over the grave of his illustrious victim, and the undying curses of all virtuous men, in all coming time, were secured to the perpetrator of his murder.



## THE STORY OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

### FOR A SCHOOL, OR CLUB PROGRAMME.

Each numbered paragraph is to be given to a pupil or member to read, or to recite, in a clear, distinct tone.

If the school or club is small, each person may take three or four paragraphs, but should not be required to recite them in succession.

1. Alexander Hamilton was born on the island of Nevis, in the British West Indies, on the eleventh of January, 1757.

2. His father, James Hamilton, was a Scotch merchant, and his mother, a French lady, descended from that noble people, the Huguenots.

3. "This happy blending of contrasted elements in the original source of his blood and character—solidity and enthusiasm, sagacity to project theories and facility in their execution—was exemplified in all his subsequent career."

4. His father was unfortunate in business and died in penury. His mother was noted for elegant manners and a strong intellect, which made a vivid impression upon her son. Both parents died while he was but a child.

5. He was early thrown upon the care of his mother's relatives, and passed the greater part of his childhood and youth in the Danish island of Santa Cruz.

6. "He soon learned to speak and write the French language fluently, and was taught to speak the Decalogue in Hebrew at the school of a Jewess, when so small, that he was placed standing by her side at the table."

7. His education, though brief and desultory, was conducted chiefly under the supervision of the Rev. Hugh Knox, D. D., a Presbyterian clergyman. This gentleman gave to the mind of his aspiring pupil a religious bias as lasting as his life.

8. He took a great interest in the boy, and kept up an affectionate correspondence with him in after years.

9. Before Hamilton was thirteen years of age, he had to earn his own living, and was placed, accordingly, in the counting house of Mr. Nicholas Cruger, a wealthy and highly respectable merchant of Santa Cruz.

10. He became speedily noted for his quickness, zeal and assiduity, and for remarkable intelligence in the despatch of business.

11. While boys of his age were thinking of marbles and other games, Hamilton was thinking of the future with a laudable ambition to make his career a bright and successful one.

12. He wrote, soon after being appointed to this position, to a young friend at school, as follows: "I condemn the groveling condition of a clerk to which my fortune condemns me, and would willingly risk my life though not my character, to exalt my station. I mean to prepare the way for futurity."

13. "Herein gleams the true fire of a noble youth; love of fame, and the strongest attachment to untarnished integrity; guarantees of splendid success, which in this instance were never disproved by facts."

14. His business letters, many of which have been preserved, would have done credit to any trained clerk of any age. Such was the confidence of his employer in this mere child, that he apparently left him time and again in charge of all the affairs of his counting house.

15. While in Mr. Cruger's office young Hamilton spent every spare moment in studying mathematics, ethics, chemistry, biography and history, and in storing his mind with knowledge of every kind.

16. A great hurricane, long remembered for the destruction it caused, devastated the island. The boy wrote and published anonymously such a vivid and strong description of it, that it attracted general attention, and the young author was discovered.

17. Through the influence of Dr. Knox, several relatives and friends joined together in providing funds for a college education for the promising lad.

18. He was accordingly sent in the autumn of 1772 to Elizabethtown, New Jersey, to prepare for King's College (now Columbia University), in New York City, under the instruction of Francis Barber. This teacher afterwards became a distinguished officer in the American service.

19. Hamilton entered King's College in the latter part of 1773, and with the aid of a tutor made remarkable progress, directing his studies towards the profession of medicine.

20. The difficulties with England were rapidly ripening, and his versatile pen was employed in the production of elaborate pamphlets and minor tracts upon the burning questions of the day.

21. These writings, published anonymously, were so remarkable that they were attributed to Jay and other well known patriots.

22. They involved their author in a controversy with Dr. Cooper, the President of the College, and with many of the most distinguished royalists of the land.

23. When the name of the youthful champion was proclaimed, Dr. Cooper would not believe at first that his able opponent was but a mere boy of seventeen or eighteen.

24. When a great public meeting was held in the "Fields"—now the City Hall Park—he pushed his way to the front, and mounting the platform, astounded the vast audience by his eloquent and fervid speech in behalf of colonial rights.

25. While in College he organized a military company of his fellow students. They styled themselves "Hearts of Oak," and wore a green uniform, surmounted by a leathern cap, on which was inscribed, "Freedom or Death."

26. Having already become a recognized leader in New York, he was made captain of the company of artillery raised by that province, and at once entered upon active service.

27. He soon had a body of men that furnished a model for discipline and efficiency, and which won the high praise of General Greene.

28. At Long Island and White Plains, his company greatly distinguished itself, and his gallant conduct in the latter battle attracted the attention of Washington, the commander-in-chief.

29. During the retreat through New Jersey, his battery was frequently engaged in firm and heroical action with the enemy, and on one occasion he repelled the progress of the British troops on the banks of the Raritan.

30. He fought at the head of his brave command at Trenton and Princeton, and continued with them until he was appointed by Washington to an important place on his staff with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and became his inseparable companion.

31. "Strangers," said Washington Irving, "were surprised to see a youth, scarce twenty years of age, received into the implicit confidence and admitted into the gravest counsels of a man like Washington."

32. "Harrison, 'the old secretary,' much his senior, looked upon him with an almost paternal eye, and regarding his diminutive size and towering spirit, used to call him 'the little lion,' while Washington would now and then speak of him by the cherishing appellation of 'my boy'."

33. Hamilton served as aide to Washington at the battles of Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth. At his own request he led at the siege of Yorktown the force which carried by assault one of the strongest bulwarks of the foe.

34. On the fourteenth of December, 1780, he married Miss Elizabeth Schuyler, the second daughter of Major General Schuyler, and "so became connected with a rich and powerful New York family, which was of great advantage to him in many ways."

35. Hamilton was the first to receive the papers revealing Arnold's treason, and tried to intercept the traitor at Verplanck's point, but was too late to catch him.

36. Hamilton ceased to be a member of Washington's military family on the tenth of February, 1781, in consequence of a misunderstanding with the commander-in-chief, in which the youthful Colonel was clearly in the wrong. The coolness between the two was, however, but temporary.

37. At Yorktown, in command of a light corps of infantry, he brilliantly led a storming party which took one of the British redoubts; and saved the life of the Major, commanding the opposing forces.

38. When but twenty-three years old he addressed a letter to James Duane and Robert Morris, in which were outlined the general features of the system finally adopted by the United States.

39. He was appointed by Robert Morris receiver of taxes for New York, and was afterwards elected one of the delegates from New York to Congress.

40. Hamilton at once became one of its leading members. One of the delegates said to him, "If you were but ten years older and a thousand pounds richer, Congress would give you the highest place they have to bestow."

41. He conceived and started "The Federalist," in which were contained those famous essays which have immortalized his name.

42. He was elected a member of the Federal convention of 1787, when thirty years of age, and by his wonderful eloquence, skill and management, triumphantly carried the ratification of the constitution.

43. While in the New York Legislature of 1787, he secured the amendment of the Criminal Code; the establishment of the University of New York, and a general system of public instruction.

44. When the Treasury Department was organized in September, 1789, the first year of Washington's administration, Hamilton was placed at its head.

45. "In the five years that ensued, he did the work that lies at the foundation of our system of administration, gave life and meaning to the constitution, and by his policy developed two great political parties."

46. By his reports and communications on the Public Credit; on the raising and collection of the revenue; on estimates of income and expenditure; on the temporary regulation of the currency; on navigation laws and coasting trade; on the Post Office; on the purchase of West Point; on the management of the public lands; on the establishment of a mint; on manufactures; on the protective policy of the United States, etc., he revealed his consummate genius and masterly ability.

47. While in the cabinet disagreements arose between Jefferson and himself, which caused the active existence of two great political parties, the Federalists and Anti-Federalists, or Democrats, and the resignation of Jefferson as Secretary of State.



48. The influence of Hamilton was so very great that he may be said to have controlled the policy of Washington's administration.

49. On the thirty-first of January, 1795, he resigned his Secretaryship and resumed the practice of law, and soon stood at the head of the bar of New York. But he was constantly consulted by Washington as though he were still in office.

50. In 1794 Washington offered him the position of minister to England, which, for prudential reasons, he declined.

51. When the troubles with France began under the administration of John Adams, Hamilton became the leader of the party which desired war with that country.

52. When Congress ordered the raising of a provisional army with Washington as commander-in-chief, Hamilton was given the position of Inspector-General, to act as the Senior Major-General of the new organization.

53. Hamilton fully expected war, but President Adams met the French overtures of peace in a friendly spirit, and a conflict was averted.

54. This so deeply affected Hamilton that he became the avowed enemy of Adams, and in his efforts to overthrow the President, destroyed his own party.

55. He helped to defeat Aaron Burr for the Presidency by using his great influence to elect Thomas Jefferson.

56. Aaron Burr was also beaten by Hamilton's influence for the governorship of New York. The life-long quarrel between the two men led to a challenge by Burr to fight a duel.

57. Very reluctantly Hamilton consented, on account of the point of honor which would be raised if he refused, and was mortally wounded by his antagonist on the eleventh of July, 1804, at Weehawken, on the banks of the Hudson.

58. His tragic fate raised such a storm of indignation and grief, that Burr was driven forth as a murderer, an outcast and a conspirator.

59. Thus died Hamilton, universally regretted. "He was the indefatigable soldier of the press, the pen and the army."

60. He was "the American master of political sagacity, the most brilliant statesman our country has produced."

61. "In his family and among his friends he was deeply beloved and almost blindly followed. His errors and his faults came from his strong, passionate nature, and his masterly will impatient of resistance or control.

62. "Yet these were the very qualities that carried him forward to his triumphs, and enabled him to perform services to the American people which can never be forgotten."



63. With great pomp and ceremony his remains were sorrowfully laid away to rest in Trinity Churchyard, New York, on the fourteenth of July, 1804. Above them a beautiful and appropriate monument has been placed.

### AN EVENING WITH HAMILTON.

1. Music.
2. A Brief Sketch of the Early Life of Hamilton.
3. Tributes from Various Writers to the Virtues of Hamilton.
4. Vocal or Instrumental Music.
5. Discussion—Whether Hamilton was more Potential than Jefferson in the History of the United States.
6. The Character of Aaron Burr.
7. Music.
8. Discussion—Defense of Hamilton in Accepting the Challenge of Burr.
9. Essay—Hamilton's Love for his Country.
10. Music—America.

### QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

*Where was Alexander Hamilton born? What is said of his precocity? Of his preparation for college? Of the condition of the American colonies? Of Hamilton's first publication? Of the work that followed it? What was his first effort in military affairs?*

*What was Hamilton's opinion of the Quaker General, Nathaniel Greene? What part did Hamilton have in the disaster on Long Island? What can you say of the artillery company? What of the retreat through New Jersey? How many of his artillery men were left after Trenton and Princeton? Why did Washington appoint him as one of his aids? When was this appointment made?*

*What was his conduct in subsequent battles? What of his merits while in the service of Washington? With what brilliant exploit did Hamilton's military career terminate? When, in his opinion, was the most trying time for the colonies?*

*What was Hamilton's opinion of the currency? What remedy did he propose? When was he married? What can you say of his bride? When was he admitted to the bar? When did he take his seat in Congress? What can you say of the U. S. Congress at that time? What was his conduct toward the Tories after the close of the war? What was the condition of the country between the close of the Revolution and the adoption of the Constitution? In what shape did the warning come? What effort towards united action was made by various States?*

*What was Hamilton's attitude toward Governor Clinton? Where did his conspicuous ability appear to have the best effect? How was his best work done? What was the effect of his speech at the opening of the convention? What can you say of "The Federalist?" What was the result of Hamilton's defeat for re-election?*

*What was his greatest task as Secretary of the Treasury? What was his age when he took his seat in the Cabinet? What can you say of the financial scheme which he laid before Congress? For what did his policy provide? What is said of the contrast of Hamilton with Jefferson, Adams, etc.? What is Professor Morse's statement? What is said of the establishment of a national bank? Of Webster's tribute? Of the elements of opposition to Hamilton?*

*What attempt was made to drive him from the Cabinet? What is said of the failings of Hamilton? Of the pamphlet he published in 1800? Of Governor Jay? Of Lafayette? Of the appointment of Hamilton as General? Of the bill submitted by Hamilton to Congress? Of the Louisiana territory?*

*Of Miranda? Of the great qualities of a General in Hamilton? Of Lincoln? Of Talleyrand? Of peace and the feelings of Adams? Of the closing public career of Hamilton? Of his genius as a lawyer?*

*What encomium was pronounced by Kent? What is said of the decaying Federalist party? Of Aaron Burr and of Jefferson? Of the crowning defeat of Burr? Of his forcing a quarrel with Hamilton? Of Hamilton's criticisms of Burr? Of the acceptance of the challenge from Burr? Of what preceded the duel? Of the duel and its result?*

*Of Senator Lodge's discussion of the question? Of the author's conclusions? Of the unveiling of Hamilton's statue? What tribute was paid by Judge Spencer? By Chancellor Kent?*

*What was Hamilton called, and why? How did Hamilton feel towards Andre? What did he say of his execution? How did the disagreement between Washington and Hamilton arise? What does Hamilton say of foreign influence? What is said of Hamilton and the Constitution? What observation does R. C. Winthrop make of the Constitution?*

*How is the Federalist regarded? What great productions are inferior to it? Upon what is it founded? What does it contain? When was it first begun? What does Hamilton say of its purpose? What is said of the appreciation abroad of the Federalist? What does Hamilton say of The Union? Of ancient and modern Republics? On national emergencies? On the re-election of the President? On term of office? What tribute does Marshall pay Hamilton?*

*What charges were made against Washington? What defense did Hamilton make? What was the character of Burr? What were his chief agents, etc.? What is said of his political intrigue? Of his eloquence? Of his love of country? What was the character of Hamilton in contrast? What single fact proves the worth of that character? What was Hamilton's protest against duelling?*

*When was Hamilton made Secretary of the Treasury? What did Robert Morris say of him? What is said of Robert Troup's interview? Of Hamilton's self-confidence? With whom is he compared? What is the story of Hamilton at Valley Forge? What account is given of the Battle of Yorktown? Of the Battle of Princeton?*

### SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL STUDY.

1. *The Precocity of Alexander Hamilton.*
2. *Hamilton as a General.*
3. *Hamilton in the Federal Convention of 1787.*
4. *Hamilton's Early Views of Republicanism.*
5. *The Articles of Confederation—their Nature and Weakness.*
6. *Hamilton as Secretary of the Treasury.*
7. *The Value of the Federalist Papers.*
8. *The Relations of John Adams to Hamilton.*

### CHRONOLOGICAL EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

- 1757 Jan. 11th, Alexander Hamilton born at Nevis, one of the Antilles group of West India Islands.
- 1762-69 Educated in Santa Cruz. Clerk with Cruger.
- 1772 Aug. Terrible hurricane. Letter regarding it.  
Oct. 11, reached Elizabethtown, New Jersey, to study.
- 1773 Applied for admission to Princeton College to take "Special Course." Refused. December, admitted to King's College (now Columbia University).
- 1774 July 6, made great address at "The Fields Meeting."
- 1776 March, Captain of company of artillery, "Hearts of Oak." August 27, Battle of Long Island. September 15, Battle of Harlem Heights. October 28, Battle of White Plains, Chatterton Hill. November and December, retreat through New Jersey. December 26, Battle of Trenton.
- 1777 January 3, Battle of Princeton. March 15, Aide-de-Camp to Washington. Sent to Congress by Washington, etc.  
April 5, Letter to the Provincial Congress. July 22, Remarks on Burgoyne and Howe, etc. August 4, Remarks on the Fall of Ticonderoga. Battle of Germantown. October 30, Hamilton sent to Gates and Putnam. November, Hamilton goes to Gates for troops. December 19, exchange of prisoners at Philadelphia; Hamilton acting for General Washington.
- 1778 June 18, Hamilton urges attack on Howe. Assigned to Lafayette. June 28, Battle of Monmouth.

- September 5, Hamilton in command of a corps. October 14, Battle of Yorktown.
- 1779 Submits plans of action to Congress.
- 1780 Letter to Robert Morris on Finance.  
September and October. Arnold and Andre affair. Letter to Mr. Duane. Hamilton asks for a separate command.  
December 14, marriage to Miss Elizabeth Schuyler.
- 1781 Declines to go as envoy to France. February 16, resigns as aide to Washington.
- 1782 Resumes the study of law. May 2, Receiver of Continental Taxes in New York. Elected member of Congress. November 25, takes his seat in Congress.
- 1783 Resumes the practice of law.
- 1786 September 11, Hamilton acts as Delegate to the Annapolis Convention.
- 1787 May 14, Philadelphia Convention. Hamilton's plan.  
June 15, Poughkeepsie Convention. Hamilton's great speech and results.
- 1788 Adoption of the Constitution, by the ratification of New York. Federalist papers.
- 1789 March 4, Organization of the government. Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury.
- 1794 Refuses the office of Chief Justice of the United States.
- 1798 December 14, General-in-Chief of the United States Army.
- 1804 July 11. Duel with Aaron Burr. July 12. Death of Hamilton. July 14. Burial in Trinity Churchyard, New York.

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